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MR. ADAMS' SPEECH, ON WAR WITH GREAT BRITAIN AND MEXICO:

WITH THE SPEECHES OF MESSRS. WISE AND INGERSOLL,

TO WHICH IT IS IN REPLY.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

THURSDAY, April 14.

[The House being in committee of the whole on the state of the Union, on the bill making appropriations for the civil and diplomatic expenses of government for the year 1842, and having under consideration the following item, viz.,

"No. 218. For salaries of the ministers of the United States to Great Britain, France, Russia, Prussia, Austria, Spain, Mexico, and Brazil, seventy-two thousand dollars."

Mr. Linn, of New York, moved to strike out so much of the said item as related to the mission to Mexico.]

Mr. Wise said he had not expected to be called to enter into this discussion; the motion which gave rise to it was wholly unexpected by him; but as the question had been opened, he felt it a duty to his constituents and the country to take a part in it. He should, in a manner perfectly calm and dispassionate, address a few words to that class to which the gentlemen from New York (Mr. Linn,) and Vermont (Mr. Slade) belonged.

The gentleman from New York had moved to strike from this bill this item for the salary of a minister to Mexico, and this just at the moment when the New Orleans papers had announced to the world his immediate departure as minister to a government toward which we stood in the most delicate and important relations—relations to be settled by the negotiations he was to conduct. Yes, and whilst, for all Mr. W. knew, there might be ten or a dozen of our own native citizens in the mines of Mexico, wearing the chains of a degrading bondage, although at the very first hint from the British minister a British citizen, taken in company, side by side with the very men of ours whom they had manacled and set to clean the streets, was promptly released. Yet the gentleman from New York would have our fellow citizens still wear their fetters, and still endure their public degradation; and why? Because, forsooth, it had been the ulterior object of the President and of a certain party in this country to annex Texas to the Union. Our citizens had claims on that government to the amount of twelve or thirteen millions, and yet we must not send a minister to demand the property or protect the freedom of our citizens in Mexico.

The tyrant of Mexico was now at war with Texas, and had threatened that he would invade her territory, and "never stop until he had driven slavery beyond the Sabine," and the gentleman would let him let loose his servile horde on the citizens of Louisiana, yet send no minister to remonstrate or to threaten him.

[Mr. Slade here explained. He had not been opposed to our having a minister at the court of Mexico, but only to the individual selected to occupy that post.]

Mr. Wise said he could forgive the gentleman, because he knew not the consequences that might flow from the doctrines he was accustomed to advance. These gentlemen would not send a minister to prevent the invasion even of the United States itself, lest by any possibility it might lead to the annexation of Texas.

[Mr. Linn explained, insisting that he had not opposed the mission, but had conceded that there might be sufficient grounds for it. He had moved to withhold the salary at present, because he believed that the whole movement had originated in a desire to annex Texas to the Union. Being, however, well satisfied that the committee would not consent to strike out the appropriation, he was willing to withdraw his motion.]

(Loud cries of, "No, no.")

Mr. Wise No, the gentleman shall not withdraw it now.

Mr. Steenrod said he had listened attentively to the gentleman from New York, and his entire argument, from beginning to end, had been directed against the mission, and not the individual who now filled it.

Mr. Wise resumed, and repeated what he had before said as to the possibility that the Mexican arms might drive back the slaves of Texas beyond the Sabine upon Louisiana and Arkansas. The English papers openly advocated the doctrine that it was the aim and policy of Great Britain to make what she was pleased to denominate the insolvent nations pay their debts to her by the cession of territory. Thus Spain must surrender Cuba, and Mexico must surrender Texas and California.

Let her obtain Cuba, and she will command the Gulf of Mexico and the mouth of the Mississippi, and nothing will prevent her from making that sea a *Mare Clausum* to the people of the West. Let her obtain California, and establish a naval station there, and she at once controls the whole trade of the Pacific ocean. From this we can understand her policy towards Spain, and it is a part of the same policy, that she should keep increasing the debt of Mexico, by affording to her the means of invading Texas and the United States, and thus ultimately force her to give up California. The gentleman had stated that it was the design of the President to accomplish the annexation of Texas, if possible. Mr. W. demanded on what proof he made that assertion?

Mr. Linn. Does the gentleman deny it?

Mr. Wise. I have no authority to deny it or to admit it.

Mr. Linn. Do you make the issue, and I will give you the proof, &c.

Mr. Wise said that, although he did not know anything of the matter he might for the argument's sake, deny it, and if he should do so, could the gentleman produce any proof of it? What was the authority on which the House was asked to believe it? The gentleman's mere *ipse dixit*. What did he know of the opinions or purposes of the President of the United States? His assertion must go for nothing. But suppose the President should be desirous of such an issue, what then? Mr. W. knew no more of the fact than the gentleman, but he earnestly hoped and trusted that the President was as desirous as he was represented to be. But Mr. W. was prepared to show, and from the highest authority, not what was the opinion of a slaveholder, but of an individual now on that floor, but who occupied the Presidential chair at the time the gentleman from Vermont, (Mr. Slade) was a clerk in the Department of State. He would show that when that individual was President, his Secretary of State in 1825, and again in 1827, had offered a million of dollars for the addition of that territory to the United States. Here Mr. W. quoted the following letter from Mr. Clay, then Secretary of State, to Mr. Poinsett, then our minister at Mexico, dated March 16, 1825. Speaking of the boundary between us and Texas, the letter said:

"Some difficulties may possibly hereafter arise between the two countries from the line thus agreed on, against which it would be difficult to guard, if practicable; and, as the government of Mexico may not be supposed to have any disinclination to the fixation of a new line which would prevent those difficulties, the President wishes you to sound it on that subject, and to avail yourself of a favorable disposition, if you should find it, to effect that object. The line of the Sabine approaches our great Western mart nearer than could be wished. Perhaps the Mexican government may not be unwilling to establish that of the Rio Brasso de Dios, or the Rio Colorado, or the Snow Mountains, or the Rio del Norte, in lieu of it. By the agreed line, portions of both the Red River and branches of the Ar-

kansas are thrown on the Mexican side, and the navigation of both those rivers, as well as that of the Sabine, is made common to the respective inhabitants of the two countries," &c.

Here the object is avowed, under the pretext of establishing a new line of boundary. In a subsequent letter, dated March 15, 1827, the same officer opened the subject more fully to our minister in Mexico, as follows:

"The great extent and facility which appears to have attended the procurement of grants from the government of the United Mexican States, for large tracts of country to citizens of the United States, in the province of Texas, authorize the belief that but little value is placed upon the possession of the province by that government. These grants seem to have been made without any sort of an equivalent, judging according to our opinions of the value of land. They have been made to, and apparently in contemplation of being settled by, citizens from the United States. These emigrants will carry with them our principles of law, liberty, and religion; and however much it may be hoped that they might be disposed to amalgamate with the ancient inhabitants of Mexico, so far as political freedom is concerned, it would be almost too much to expect that all collisions would be avoided on other subjects. Already some of these collisions have manifested themselves, and others, in the progress of time, may be anticipated with confidence. These collisions may insensibly enlist the sympathies and feelings of the two republics, and lead to misunderstandings.

"The fixation of a line of boundary of the United States on the side of Mexico, should be such as to secure not merely certainty and apparent safety in the respective limits of the two countries, but the consciousness of freedom from all danger of attack on either side, and the removal of all motives for such attack. That of the Sabine brings Mexico nearer our great Western commercial capital than is desirable; and although we are now and for a long time may remain, perfectly satisfied with the justice and moderation of our neighbor, still, it would be better for both parties that neither should feel that he is in any condition of exposure on the remote contingency of an alteration in existing friendly sentiments.

"Impressed with these views, the President has thought the present might be an auspicious period for urging a negotiation, at Mexico, to settle the boundary between the territories of the two republics. The success of the negotiation will probably be promoted by throwing into it other motives than those which strictly belong to the subject itself. If we could obtain such a boundary as we desire, the government of the United States might be disposed to pay a reasonable pecuniary consideration. The boundary which we prefer is that which, beginning at the mouth of the Rio del Norte in the sea, shall ascend that river to the mouth of the Rio Puerco, thence ascending this river to its source, and from its source, by a line due North, to strike the Arkansas, thence following the course of the Southern bank to its source, in latitude 42 degrees North, and thence by that parallel of latitude to the South sea. The boundary thus described would, according to the United States Tanner's map, published in the United States, leave Santa Fe within the limits of Mexico, and the whole of Red River or Rio Roxo, and the Arkansas, as far up as it is probably navigable, within the limits assigned to the United States."

Here is a proposition to procure twice as large a territory as is now included in Texas, and the *then* President of the United States was not only willing to have it annexed, but was willing to pay for it. The letter proceeds:

"If that boundary be unattainable, we would, as the next most desirable, agree to that of the Colorado, beginning at its mouth, in the Bay of Bernardo, and ascending the river to its source, thence by a line due North to the Arkansas, and thence, as above traced, to the South Sea. This latter boundary would probably also give us the whole of the Red River, would throw us somewhat further from Santa Fe, but it would strike Arkansas possibly at a navigable point. To obtain the first described boundary, the President authorizes you to offer to the government of Mexico a sum not exceeding one million of dollars. If you find it impracticable to procure that line, then you are authorized to offer for the above line of the Colorado, the sum of five hundred thousand dollars. If either of the above offers should be accepted, you may stipulate for the payment of the sum of money, as you may happen to agree, within any period not less than three months after the exchange at the city of Washington of the ratifications of the treaty.

"Should you be able to conclude a treaty, it will be necessary that it should contain a stipulation for the mutual right of navigation of the Rio del Norte or the Colorado; as the one or the other may be agreed on, and for the exercise of common jurisdiction over the river itself. The treaty may also provide for the confirmation of all grants for lands made prior to *its date*, with the conditions of which there shall have been a compliance; and it may contain a provision similar to that in the Louisiana and Florida treaties, for the incorporation of the inhabitants into the Union, as soon as it can be done consistently with the principles of the Federal Constitution, and for the enjoyment of their liberty, property, and religion.

"There should also be a provision made for the delivery of the country to the United States simultaneously, or as nearly so as practicable, with the payment of the consideration. We should be satisfied with the surrender of possession at that time, as far as the river line extends, (the Del Norte or the Colorado,) and to receive the residue as soon as the

line to the Arkansas can be traced, which the treaty ought to provide should be done without unnecessary delay, and, at all events, before a future day to be specified."

Thus this former president was not only desirous of procuring all this territory, but of admitting its inhabitants into the Union. This is not hearsay, it is authentic information, information on which the gentleman might rely with much more certainty than on any vague report about the existing Chief Magistrate. This was a line of policy which Mr. W. had approved and applauded at the time, and which he still applauded and approved, if, as was said, it was the policy of Mr. Tyler. There was now no money to be paid for the territory, and it was occupied by a sovereign power which had authority to transfer it. If the annexation had been wise and peaceable, and practicable and desirable in 1827, it was not less so in 1842. It was fair to presume that the same motives still continued to operate on those who sought the same thing. We may well suppose the present Executive to be in favor of it, as every wise statesman must be, who is not governed by fanaticism or local sectional prejudice. And why should not Texas be united to this Union? What would the effect of such an event be? To extend slavery? Not at all. Slavery existed in Texas to just the same extent now as it would were Texas a part of the United States. The only difference would be to bring it under our own jurisdiction, which now it is not. Philanthropy itself, even the philanthropy of the class to which the gentleman belongs, according to their own views of it, would be promoted by the annexation of Texas. It increases no more bondage, it makes no more slaves, but it will bring that wide territory within your reach, according to your own ideas. What power have you now over slavery in Texas? None at all. It is a foreign State, where you can exert no influence over slavery, either to mitigate its severity or restrain its abuse. But let it be annexed to the Union, and it is then within the jurisdiction which you claim over slavery in our own country. I ask, is it in the spirit of philanthropy that gentlemen oppose it? Is it in the spirit of Christian missionaries? Mr. W. thought it was held among them that to benefit the heathen, they must be reached, you must be among them. Christianity must be brought to bear upon their minds; and so, if these philanthropic gentlemen wanted to mitigate those evils of slavery over which they made such doleful lamentations, let them bring it within our reach and jurisdiction.

Could they multiply their petitions ten thousand fold, would they reach slavery in a foreign State? If the spirit of emancipation was to go forth, like a delivering angel, from the North toward the South, striking off manacles and drying up tears, (Mr. W. now spoke as one of themselves,) why not bring the slavery of Texas also within its range? Why leave that one dark spot untouched? Did they not perceive that, as long as Texas remained in a separate State, it would be an asylum for slavery? Drive it South, as they might, here the slaveholder could set them at defiance; for, once beyond the Texian boundary line, their jurisdiction was at an end. Yet they were banded together as one man to oppose the annexation. I ask them if they are acting wisely? Could any thing more strikingly show the blindness of fanaticism?

But possibly they would evade the force of this argument by looking to England to emancipate the slaves of Texas: if so, they utterly mistook the motives and the means of England. She had in the Republic of Texas a rival to the United States in the production of cotton, and as long as she wished to retain her as such, she would keep up the slave labor in Texas against the slave labor in the United States. Mr. W. scouted the idea of England being sincerely engaged in the work of emancipation, referred to the late detection of a conspiracy between British cruisers on the coast of Africa and the slave dealers, and also to her undeviating course of oppression in India, as proofs to the contrary. If gentlemen wished to keep Texas as a foreign State in juxtaposition with our South-western border, that she might be a mart for contraband dealers in cotton for the benefit of England, and to the injury of the Southern States—if that was their plan—then it was the surest way that could be taken to rivet upon her the chains of slavery for ever. No: if they were really sincere in their professed desires to see slavery abolished, their true and only course was to annex Texas to the United States. [A laugh in certain portions of the House.]

Mr. W. now took a different view of the subject. There was an anomaly connected with Texas, which, when first stated, appeared to be a paradox, but,

when duly considered, was quite intelligible and undoubtedly true. While she was, as a State, weak and almost powerless in resisting invasion, she was herself irresistible as an invading and a conquering Power. She had but a sparse population, and neither men nor money of her own to raise and equip an army for her own defence; but let her once raise the flag of foreign conquest—let her once proclaim a crusade against the rich States to the south of her, and in a moment volunteers would flock to her standard in crowds from all the States in the great valley of the Mississippi—men of enterprise and hardy valor before whom no Mexican troops could stand for an hour. They would leave their own towns, arm themselves, and travel on their own cost, and would come up in thousands to plant the lone star of the Texian banner on the Mexican capital. They would drive Santa Anna to the South, and the boundless wealth of captured towns, and rifled churches, and a lazy, vicious, and luxurious priesthood, would soon enable Texas to pay her soldiery and redeem her State debt, and push her victorious arms to the very shores of the Pacific. And would not all this extend the bounds of slavery? Yes, the result would be that before another quarter of a century the extension of slavery would not stop short of the Western Ocean. We had but two alternatives before us; either to receive Texas into our fraternity of States, and thus make her our own; or to leave her to conquer Mexico, and become our most dangerous and formidable rival.

To talk of restraining the people of the great Valley from emigrating to join her armies was all in vain; and it was equally vain to calculate on their defeat by any Mexican forces, aided by England or not. They had gone once already; it was they that conquered Santa Anna at San Jacinto; and three fourths of them, after winning that glorious field, had peaceably returned to their homes. But once set before them the conquest of the rich Mexican provinces, and you might as well attempt to stop the wind. This Government might send its troops to the frontier, to turn them back, and they would run over them like a herd of buffalo. Or did the gentleman intend to put forth the odious, exploded, detestable doctrine of "no expatriation?" The Western people would mock at such a barrier; they would come armed to the frontier, and who should stop them from going where they pleased? Let the work once begin, and Mr. W. did not know that the House would hold *him* very long.

Give me, said Mr. W., five millions of dollars, and I would undertake to do it myself. Although I do not know how to set a single squadron in the field, I could find men to do it, and with five millions of dollars to begin with, I would undertake to pay every American claimant the full amount of his demand, with interest, yes, four-fold. I would fix our boundary, not where Mr. Adams tried to fix it, at the Rio del Norte, but far, far beyond. I would place California where all the power of Great Britain should never be able to reach it. Slavery should pour itself abroad without restraint, and find no limit but the Southern ocean. The Camanches should no longer hold the richest mines of Mexico; but every golden image which had received the profanation of a false worship should soon be melted down, not into Spanish milled dollars, indeed, but into good American eagles. [Laughter, mixed with some exclamations.] Yes; there should more hard money flow into the United States than any exchequer or sub-treasury could ever circulate; I would cause as much gold to cross the Rio del Norte as the mules of Mexico could carry; ay, and make a better use of it, too, than any lazy, bigotted priesthood under heaven. [A general laugh.]

I am not quarrelling with the particular religion of these priests, but I say that any priesthood that has accumulated and sequestered and hoarded such immense stores of wealth, ought to disgorge, and it is a benefit to mankind to scatter their wealth abroad, where it can do good. He knew that gentlemen might hold all this as chimerical; but he told them it was already begun, and it would go on. He here referred to the story of Captain Boyle, an enterprising commander of a small craft in the Revolution, who proclaimed a blockade of all the coast of England, and actually had his proclamation printed and circulated in the streets of London. Yes; the peaceable cockneys had gone quietly to sleep in all security, and waked up in the morning and found London blockaded!—[Loud laughter.] And this adventurous Capt. Boyle had threaded all the dangers of the British channel, escaped all their cruisers, and returned in safety to

this country, having performed the feat of blockading Great Britain. So Texas had proclaimed a blockade against all the coast of Mexico, and though she had no fleet to enforce it, she would be able to make it good by hewing her way to the Mexican capital. Nor could all the vaunted power of England stop the chivalry of the West till they had planted the Texian star on the walls of the city of Montezuma. Nothing could keep these booted loafers from rushing on till they kicked the Spanish priests out of the temples they profaned. Gentlemen might be horror-stricken at this.

[A voice: "Oh no, sir, not at all; we are quite calm."]

Mr. W. went into a calculation to show that it would be impossible for Mexico to resist the force of Texas when recruited from the Western States: referred, in illustration, to the heroic resistance by 600 American troops under Fanning of a Mexican army 3,000 strong, causing even their cavalry to recede before men who had not a bayonet among them; and inquired with what hope of success they could withstand a regiment of flying artillery, a couple of regiments of rifle-men, and a body of light infantry?

He wanted no war with Mexico: he went for sending a minister to preserve peace; but, unless she treated our citizens on an equal footing with those of England, he was for war, and cared not how soon.

It was said that this would marry us to a war with England. This had been too well answered by his friend (Mr. Cushing) already; but for his own part, if he was to choose a war with any Power, the prospect of a war with England was the very thing he should desire. If he were to pick out a war to suit his taste, it would be a war with England. Here was a "foeman worthy of our steel." He would leave Mexico to Texas and the people of the Valley: they could soon dispose of her. Let a war come; with France, the United States, and Texas, on the one side, and England and Mexico on the other; he would ask nothing better.

Mr. W. proceeded to insist that a majority of the people of the United States were in favor of the annexation: at all events, he would risk it with the democracy of the North. He would ask the men of Maine and New Hampshire, and the whalers of Nantucket, whether they were willing that England should get possession of California? He would risk all the blue lights. Our policy was peace, but our people were warlike: and to threaten them with the growl of the British lion was the very way to rouse the American eagle from her eyrie, cause her to plume her wings, and take her soaring flight to the ramparts of Mexico, and there demand a compliance with all our just demands.

Sir, said Mr. W., it is not only the duty of this Government to demand the liquidation of our claims and the liberation of our citizens, but to go further and demand the non-invasion of Texas. Shall we sit still while the standard of insurrection is raised on our borders, and let a horde of slaves and Indians and Mexicans roll up to the boundary line of Arkansas and Louisiana? No. It is our duty at once to say to Mexico, "if you strike Texas, you strike us:" and if England, standing by, should dare to intermeddle, and ask, "Do you take part with Texas?" his prompt answer should be, "Yes, and against you."

Such, he would let gentlemen know, was the spirit of the whole people of the great valley of the West.

One of the best effects of this state of things would be to cause the abolition party, to which these gentlemen belonged, to hide their diminished heads. Yes; it would very quickly subject them to the law of tar and feathers. Let them utter such sentiments as they now poured forth so freely when the country was once in an actual state of war, and they would meet the fate which their friends met in the last war.

Mr. W. then referred to the situation of politicians with respect to war. Sir, said he, they dare not oppose a war again. They remember the fate of those who opposed the last war, and who suffered political death in consequence of it. No politician will again risk his prospects and reputation in opposing a war. It is in the power of a resolute minority to push the majority into war at any time, simply because the politicians are afraid to oppose it. They are burnt children, and they never would venture to oppose another war; if they do, they are doomed men.

Mr. W. then touched on the intimation which had been thrown out that the President sought to involve the country in war to promote his own ambitious purposes. Did he believe John Tyler to be such a man, he would denounce him from the Capitol to Accomac. But, on the other hand, he would denounce him as loudly if he suffered a tittle of the national honor to be sacrificed. He adverted to the growth of the worship of mammon throughout our country in these piping times of peace, and said that, if the crystal waters of peace proved insufficient to cleanse us from the accumulated corruption, he would let the bloody streams of war perform the work. It would sweep off drones and loafers, and men of broken fortunes and broken reputation, many of whom would hail the first blast of the trumpet as the renovating note of their emancipation. War was a curse, but it had its blessings too, as the destroying lightning of heaven purified the atmosphere. He would vote for this mission as the means of peace; but if it must lead to war, then he would vote it the more willingly.

MR. INGERSOLL'S SPEECH.

Mr. C. J. Ingersoll moved to amend the amendment by reducing the sums of appropriation for the missions to Austria and Prussia one-half.

He desired to add in connection with this subject a very few words on what he conceived to be one of the most misunderstood interests in the country. There had come among us lately an envoy extraordinary from Great Britain; a gentleman whom he had the honor to know personally a great many years ago, and who, it gave him great pleasure to say, as far as his personal inclinations and personal temper were concerned, he was sure came to us in a peaceable spirit, because he was sure that was his nature; and he took great pleasure in saying it, as this gentleman had been the subject of some animadversion in the newspapers, that he never would be convicted of any dishonorable charge, and that in all his intercourse with Americans, at all times, throughout a long life, he had been a candid, deliberate and generous man. What instructions this minister had, he knew nothing about; but in his (Mr. I.'s) apprehension, he could win his way at least without any difficulty by taking one course, and that he would take the liberty publicly to suggest.

It was a remarkable fact, not often adverted to, that on the five great points of controversy between the United States and Great Britain, she was in every one of them an egregious aggressor. On the Maine question, she took our soil; on the Caroline question, our property; on the Oregon, our property; on the Creole case, what we believed to be our property; and, on the question of restitution, she came across the great ocean, from the old world to the new, demanding that we should submit not only our vast commerce in all the seas of the ocean, but our coasting trade, to visitation and search of those who say that all they desire is to be constables of the ocean.

He was a man of peace, and he hoped we should have no war. He was not insensible to the evils of war; but he wished the British minister here to understand that he might depend on it, (and he said it with the voice of friendship,) that war would not do us so much harm as his country. In the first place, if we chose to apply the principles of war, it paid all the States' debts at once—\$200,000,000 debts would be settled—[laughter]—or, at all events, it suspended the interest on the capital during the war. In the next place, when they talked of preparation, he had hardly patience to sit still and hear it. We were prepared beyond the preparation for either of the former wars; in the first place, in having a sufficient population, in the capacity of clothing that population, and in having all the materials of war greatly superior to the materials of any other nation in the world. There was nothing in any navy of the world to be compared with the two vessels now arrived almost within the sound of his voice. There were none in the British or the French navy at all comparable with these vessels; so he was informed by an officer in the navy, and that these ships were superior to any thing in the world. All our lakes and rivers were covered with

transporting steamboats, which he was informed could readily be made efficient for harbor defence.

On this subject of preparation, it appeared to him that we were under a lamentable delusion. He should be sorry if we were better prepared, because we must always compromise, if we live in a republican country, our republicanism by the existence of an armed nation; and he would rather take this nation as it is than the most completely armed nation of the world. Give him, if we were to go to war, that moral nation in whom the principles of liberty, independence, and defiance exist, in preference to all the armed power on earth. It was a monstrous humbug to talk of the British going into New York and burning it. He had been told by the first officer in the American navy that it was just as easy to burn London as New York, and that he would answer for it, if they burned New York, give him a little opportunity and he would burn London too. [Laughter.]

They talked of a servile insurrection, of setting the slaves of the South on us, and dismembering the North. Were they to be talking in this way when they knew that Ireland, India, and Canada hung by a thread? and instead of dismembering us, we had only to let loose what their own brilliant Canning called the spirit of freedom, and they would fall to pieces like the banking system of the United States? [A laugh.] He did not wish to see Great Britain otherwise than Great Britain, except when she made aggressions on our own country. He wished to tell her, (he was understood to say,) when they talked of dismembering us, that we were in a state of perfect union, and he hoped this mission now pending here would terminate by this Administration taking its position and saying, "We are for peace; we do not want to fight. Do not make it for our interest; we are not going to yield any of our positions; we are not going to make war; but as to this and other things we cannot yield them. We cannot make war; the Senate and House of Representatives will prevent us; we are very unpopular, &c." We had the sympathies of all France, Prussia, Russia, Sweden, Denmark, every maritime nation in the world, and Texas too. [Laughter.]

He had said these things in a spirit of peace; he had no hostile temper or disposition. He trusted that it might be heard, and be not altogether without some use. He saw no difficulty at all in settling the Maine boundary question; nothing insuperable in the Caroline case, or the Creole case, or the question of the Oregon country. He saw no difficulty in settling all these questions, excepting one, and that could be settled in one day if Lord Ashburton were to say as to this question of search and visitation, "I find the President and Congress so much against me, the country so much against me, I must, as a matter of necessity, give it up."

He challenged opposition to the opinion he asserted, that there was no right of search in time of war; much less, and it was monstrous for Great Britain to come to us and talk of our yielding it, in time of peace. It was merely an exercise of brute force. He believed, in the thirty treaties he had examined within the last two hundred years, [general and prolonged laughter, in which Mr. I. participated,]—he acknowledged that he was an old man, but he had intended to say that he had examined the treaties made for two hundred years, which, as well as the law of nature, vindicated that there was no right of search, and that this demand was a monstrosity.

The greatest question in the world, which now agitated all Christendom nearly, was this mixed question of the slave trade and this right of visitation and search; and if they were left alone, it appeared by the correspondence of Mr. Stevenson and the pamphlet of Mr. Cass, that it would be for the United States to stand up in a peaceable attitude and say, We do not mean to go to war unless you coerce us; we do not mean to strike unless you strike first; but that we will vindicate these principles, which are the true American principles. He trusted the British Minister would be successful in his mission, and he believed he would be. It seemed to him that it was easy for him to succeed in his mission, provided he took the proper course; and if he should, before they adjourned to go to their homes, he conceived that almost every difficulty would be settled. There was no difficulty in their settlement by the application of a little good sense.

MR. ADAMS'S SPEECH.

Mr. Adams rose to reply to the gentleman from Pennsylvania. My only difficulty, said he, is, to reply to the gentleman's speech, so that my remarks shall have any bearing upon the gentleman's motion. [A laugh.] The gentleman talked with great eloquence and great ingenuity in favor of pushing this country into a war, under the mask of a very great solicitude for peace. He has drained the whole world of argument to prove to this House that, in the event of a war, we can burn London, and to establish the principle that there exists no such thing as the right of search in time of war. Now, the two parts of the gentleman's argument do not seem to me to agree together. If we do go to war—in favor of which the gentleman has brought forward the attractive arguments that a war will pay all our State debts to England, and enable us to burn the city of London, and establish the doctrine that there exists no right of search in time of war—it seems to me that the thing most essential to us, of all others, is the right of search. To take away from us the right of search in time of war, is to take away our principal means of defence. How does the gentleman expect we are to burn London, without the right of searching neutral vessels at sea? I ask him, and I ask this House, if this very right will not be the most powerful of all the means we can employ against Great Britain? And whether, though it may not enable us to succeed in burning London, it will not enable us to avail ourselves of the bravery of our noble tars to meet upon the ocean and to capture that property of our enemy which they will otherwise protect, by using the flag of every neutral vessel under heaven? To take away this right would at once throw a shield over the entire mass of British commerce, which would all continue to be carried on in perfect safety from any injury by us.

What bearing the arguments of the learned gentleman could possibly have on the question of our retaining a full minister at the courts of Austria and Prussia, I am totally at a loss to conjecture. But I do see that, under color of this motion, he has undertaken to instruct the new British Minister how he may, with the greatest possible facility, settle all the questions between us and Great Britain, and gain for himself an earldom. And, how, pray, is he to do it? Why, by simply yielding every thing on every point in dispute. This, I confess, seems to me to be at least a very unusual basis of negotiation.

[Mr. Ingersoll—I did not say any thing like that.]

If the gentleman did not in substance say that, I must very greatly have misunderstood him.

[Mr. Ingersoll—I said no such thing.]

The gentleman assumes that there are five points in controversy, and he says that on every one of them Great Britain is the aggressor, and that the only way to settle them is for her to agree to submit to every thing we demand. He included even the case of the Creole.

[Mr. Ingersoll—What I said was, that the main questions in dispute are not difficult of settlement; that I thought there could be no difficulty in settling the question of the Creole; and on that point I should rather have supposed that I was entitled to some little forbearance from the gentleman for my forbearance. I said further, that the Caroline case would be settled without much difficulty; and, after what the gentleman said last summer on that case, I think I am still more entitled to the credit of forbearance. I said, too, that I did not know much about the Oregon question, but believed, from what I did know, that the question could be adjusted without difficulty. And I said, lastly, that the demand for the exercise of the right of search must be abandoned.)

Mr. Adams—Well, sir, the gentleman has again had his say; he now takes back what I understood him to advance, which was, that on all the five points in dispute Great Britain was the aggressor, and that it was our duty to yield nothing. I appeal not to the gentleman, but to the conscience of every member of this committee, and to their common sense, to decide whether that was not what the gentleman did say. If he chooses now to recant it all, let him do it.

[Mr. Ingersoll—I do not choose to recant any thing. Although, as usual, the gentleman chooses to indulge his passion, and play the termagant whenever any thing is said which does not happen to suit his own senile notions.]

Mr. Adams resumed. For a rebuker of a little transient intemperance of feeling, I think the gentleman himself seems a little excited. [A laugh.] The gentleman is mistaken if he thinks I was actuated in what I said by any feeling unfriendly to him. That what I said, and that what I shall yet say, is "senile," I admit; for I am much older than the honorable gentleman, and am very conscious of the infirmities which that advanced age has brought upon me. I refer it to the gentleman's conscience to decide whether such allusions are made in a moderate and a kind temper, or are very likely to restore good feeling if it has for a moment been lost. I say again, and I appeal not to the gentleman, but to the conscience of all who hear me if it is so, that the gentleman said that on every one of the five points in controversy Great Britain was the aggressor; and whether his advice to the British negotiator, in order to gain an earldom, was to yield up every point; and that we ought not to concede one tittle on any one of the points. And now the gentleman says he does not choose to recant. There was perhaps one slight qualification in the Creole case. Then I think the gentleman added, in his usual mode, [here Mr. Adams imitated very closely the tones of Mr. Ingersoll's voice, and his peculiar manner while quoting his language. In the laugh produced by this, the closing words were lost to the reporter save this—"as *we* say."] Thus far I am willing to admit his explanation. I was happy to hear that the gentleman, in the midst of his supererogatory display of valor, did seem to feel that this was rather a tender place, and that it would be best for him to get over it as soon as he could. He certainly did add, in a lower and a somewhat subdued tone, "as *we* say."

The gentleman has gone through such a range of the laws of nations, and of the condition of the world, and has altogether made us a discourse quite equal to "the admirable Crichton," who made speeches off hand on all sorts of subjects that were proposed to him, that really I feel myself unprepared to meet him on a great many of the points he made; and therefore I shall confine myself to a few of them only; for indeed I can find not a point in all his speech which bears at all upon his own motion. What has the question about burning London or burning New York to do with our sending a full minister to the courts of Vienna or Berlin? But I do say that the whole course of his argument seemed to me, under a profession of giving to us and to the British envoy a perfect solution of all the disputed questions between this country and England, to be aimed, throughout, at driving us into a war, and preventing the present administration from settling our controversy with Great Britain. What was the tenor of his argument?

He began by saying that he was for peace—for universal peace. Then followed a most learned dissertation to prove that it was an entire mistake to suppose that we are not now prepared for war, and to demonstrate that a nation which goes into a war unprepared will infallibly conquer; that it must be so; that every unarmed and unprepared nation always had conquered its armed opposers. No; we are not unprepared for war; not at all, because we have in sight of the windows of this Capitol two armed steamers; one of them, as I am informed, nearly disabled, so that she will need in a great measure, to be rebuilt. So that, in case of immediate hostilities, we have one entire steamer, and with that we are to burn London; and though the gentleman readily admitted that it was possible, nay, very probable, that New York would be burnt too, yet as London was four or five times as large, we should have a great balance of burning on our side. Yes; we were to conquer Great Britain and burn London, and that it would be a very cheap price for all this to have the city of New York burnt in turn, or burnt first. And this was an argument for peace!

What else did the gentleman say? (What else did he not say?) He made a great argument, and a valorous display of zeal, in relation to the right of search. O, that—that was a point never to be conceded—no, never. He maintained that there is no such thing as a right of search,—no such right in time of war,—none in time of peace. Well, I do agree with the gentleman partially, on that one point, so far as to believe that there is no need of our coming to an issue with Great Britain on that point—and we have not as yet. After reading, as I have done, and carefully examining the papers put forth on both sides, I asked myself, what is the question between us? and I have heard men of the first intelligence say that they found themselves in the very same situation. The gentleman has made a

total misrepresentation of the demand of Great Britain in the matter. She has never claimed the right to search American vessels—no such thing; on the contrary, she has explicitly disclaimed any such pretension, and that to the whole extent we can possibly demand. What is it we do demand? Not that Great Britain should disclaim the right to search American vessels, but we deny to her the right to board pirates who hoist the American flag; yes, and to search British vessels, too, that have been declared to be pirates by the laws of nations—pirates by the laws of Great Britain—pirates by the laws of the United States. That is the demand of our late minister to London, whose letters are so much admired by the gentleman from Pennsylvania. Now, it happens that behind all this exceeding great zeal against the right of search, is a question which the gentleman took care not to bring into view—and that is, the support and perpetuation of the African slave trade. That is the real question between the ministers of America and Great Britain; whether slave traders, pirates, by merely hoisting the American flag, shall be saved from capture.

I say there it no such thing as an exemption from the right of search by the laws of nations, and I challenge and defy the gentleman to produce the proof. The right of search, in time of war, we have never pretended to deny. Nay, we have ourselves exercised that right during the last war. And the Supreme Court of the United States, in their decisions of prize cases brought before them, sustained us in doing so, and said it was lawful according to the laws of nations. And, indeed, we should have had a very poor chance indeed in a war with Great Britain without it.

But what is the right of search in time of peace? And how has Congress felt, and how has the American government acted on this point? I have some knowledge on this subject. In the year 1817, when I was about to return from England to the United States, Mr. Wilberforce, then a member of the British Parliament, very celebrated for his long and persevering exertions to suppress the African slave trade, wrote me a note requesting an interview. I acceded promptly to his request; and in conversation he stated to me that the British government had found that, without a mutual right of search between this country and that, upon the coast of Africa, it would be impossible to carry through the system she had formed in connection with the United States for the suppression of that infamous traffic. I had then just signed with my own hand a treaty declaring "the traffic in slaves (not the African slave trade, but THE TRAFFIC IN SLAVES) unjust and inhuman," and in which both nations engaged to do all in their power to suppress it. Mr. Wilberforce inquired of me whether I thought that a proposal for a mutual, restricted, qualified right of search would be acceptable to the American government?

I had at that moment a feeling to the full as strong against the right of search, as it had then been exercised by British cruisers, as ever the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. Ingersoll) had in all his life. I had been myself somewhat involved in the question as a public man. It constituted one of the grounds of my unfortunate difference from those with whom I had long been politically associated; and it was for the exertions I had made against the admission of that right, that I forfeited my place in the other end of the Capitol; and, which was infinitely more painful to me, for this I had differed with men long dear to me, and to whom I had also been dear, insomuch that for a time it interrupted all friendly relations between us. The first thing I said, in reply to Mr. Wilberforce, was, "No; you may as well save yourselves the trouble of making any proposals on that subject; my countrymen, I am very sure, never will assent to any such arrangement." He then entered into an argument, the full force of which I felt, when I said to him, "You may, if you think proper, make the proposal; but I think some other mode of getting over the difficulty must be resorted to; for the prejudices of my country are so immoveably strong on that point, that I do not believe they ever will assent."

I returned home, and under the administration of Mr. Monroe, I filled the office of Secretary of State; and in that capacity, I was the medium through which the proposal of the British Government was afterwards made to the United States, to arrange a special right of search for the suppression of the slave trade. This proposition I resisted and opposed in the Cabinet, with all my power. And I will say, that, although I was not myself a slaveholder, I had to resist all the slave-

holding members of the Cabinet and the President also. Mr. Monroe himself was always strongly inclined in favor of the proposition, and I maintained the opposite ground against him and the whole body of his official advisers, as long as I could.

At that time, there was in Congress, and especially in the House, a spirit of concession which I could not resist. From the year 1818 to the year 1823, not a session passed without some movement on this point, and some proposition made to request the President to negotiate for the mutual concession of this right of search. I resisted it to the utmost, and so earnest did the matter become, that, on one occasion, at an evening party in the President's house, in a conversation between myself and a distinguished gentleman of Virginia, a principal leader of this movement, now living but not now a member of this House, words become so warm, that what I said was afterwards alluded to by another gentleman of Virginia, in an address to his constituents, against my election as President of the United States. It was made an objection against me, that I was an enemy to the suppression of the slave trade. That address, and my reply to it, are in existence, and the latter in the hands of a gentleman of Virginia, now in this house, and who can correct me if I do not state the matter correctly. The address was written, and would have been published with an allusion to what I had said in the conversation, (which the writer heard, although it was not addressed to him,) but the gentleman with whom I was conversing went to him and told him that if he did refer in print to that private conversation, he would never speak to him, and so it was suppressed. I state these facts, sir, that I may set myself right on this question of the right of search.

At that time, a gentleman who was the leader of one of the parties in this House had endeavored, from year to year, to prevail with the House to require of the President a concession of the right asked: I name him to honor him; for he was one of the most talented, laborious, eloquent, and useful men upon this floor. —I allude to Charles Fenton Mercer, of Virginia. Session after session he brought forward his resolution; and he continued to press it until, finally, in 1823, he brought the House, by yeas and nays, to vote their assent to it; and, strange to say, there were but nine votes against it. The same thing took place in the the other House; the joint resolution went to the President, and he, accordingly, entered into the negotiation. It was utterly against my judgment and wishes; but I was obliged to submit, and I prepared the requisite despatches to Mr. Rush, then our Minister at the Court of London. When he made his proposal to Mr. Canning, Mr. Canning's reply was, "Draw up your convention, and I will sign it." Mr. Rush did so; and Mr. Canning without the slightest alteration whatever, without varying the dot of an *i*, or the crossing of a *t*, did affix to it his signature; thus assenting to our own terms, in our own language. The convention came back here for ratification; but, in the mean while, another spirit came over the feelings of this House as well as of the Senate; a party had been formed against the administration of Mr. Monroe; the course of the Administration was no longer favored, and the House came out in opposition to a convention drawn in conformity to its own previous views. In the Senate, however, all that could be got was the modification of one article. The Senate ratified the treaty, giving the right of search, in the fullest manner, to Great Britain, with the exception, I think, of one article, which extended the right to the coast of the United States; that was rejected.

[Mr. INGERSOLL. There were three articles negatived; the second article was rejected, and some words altered in the third.]

I cannot say as to a word or two, and I am willing to take the gentleman's statement as correct. Of one thing I am sure; no exception was taken to the right of search; that was conceded fully. In consequence of these alterations, further negotiation became necessary; and, finally, the treaty was not ratified. But, as to the right of search, in the bitterness of my soul, I say it was conceded by all the authorities of this nation. I say this, because I am not now for conceding it. I hope the negotiations now about to take place may be carried on without any such concession. There has been blustering and bullying far more than in my opinion was necessary on the subject; but no issue has yet been come to, and far less have we come to war about it.

In this very pamphlet, of which the gentleman from Pennsylvania has spoken

with so much honor, (and I shall treat it with honor, too, as having proceeded from a public minister of the United States at one of the most important courts of Europe,) there is a proposition made which I do not say we ought to concede. As a political question, involving the peace of two great countries, and the suppression of the African slave trade (for which I could bring myself to almost any concession,) it might have strong claims to consideration; but, as a politician, as a statesman, as a negotiator, I doubt if this expedient of General Cass be not even more objectionable than the right of search itself.

The proposal is that the cruising vessels of either nation should have on board a naval officer (a lieutenant I suppose) belonging to the other, and that he shall make the requisite search in person. This is held forth by way of compromise between the two parties, and as a mode of avoiding the difficulties which embarrass the question. I will not say that if the negotiation shall concentrate on this, as the only practicable expedient, it should be rejected; but I will say this: If the gentleman from Pennsylvania, or the Senate, or this House shall be so pressed as to concede that, very little ground will be left them for refusing the right of search as heretofore proposed.

But as to this question itself of the right of search, when before was the question made a matter of such infinite importance? When, in the history of this nation, was the pretension raised that no such right existed on the high seas? I will ask the Clerk to read the 54th section, I think it is, of the collection law of the United States, passed, I believe, in 1798 or '99.

[While the Clerk was searching for the act referred to—

Mr. INGERSOLL stated that although there was a majority in the Senate for the ratification of the treaty which Mr. A. had referred to, there had been a large minority opposed to it throughout.]

The Clerk then read, from the Act of 1799, Sect. 54, that, "it shall be lawful for all collectors, naval officers, inspectors, and the officers of revenue cutters, to go on board of ships or vessels in any port of the United States, or *within four leagues of the coast thereof*, if bound to the U. S. whether in or out of their respective districts, for the purpose of demanding the manifests aforesaid, and of *examining or searching* the said ship or vessel; and the said officers, respectively, shall have free access to the cabin, and every other part of the said ships or vessels; and if any box, trunk, chest, cask, or other package, shall be found in the cabin, steerage, or fore-castle of such ship or vessel, or in any other place, separate from the residue of the cargo, it shall be the duty of such officer to take an account of the same, and if necessary to put his seal thereon," &c.]

The point, said Mr. A. for which I have cited this act is, that it is here assumed that upon the *high seas*, at four leagues distance from the coast of the United States, you possess and may freely exercise the right of search. This is assumed in your revenue law; and, either by your revenue cutters or your vessels of war, you may *search* any vessel of any nation approaching within four leagues of your coast. Look to your laws for the suppression of the slave trade,* and you find the same thing. You exercise that right now. If a British vessel freighted with slaves should come to-morrow within four leagues of any point of the coast, your

* The following is the clause referred to by Mr. Adams, but not read, in the "Act to prohibit the importation of slaves," approved March 2, 1807.

SECT. 7. That if any ship or vessel shall be found in any river or bay, or on the high seas, within the jurisdictional limits of the U. S., or hovering on the coast thereof, having on board any negroes, for the purpose of selling as slaves, or with intent to land the same, contrary to this act, the ship or vessel shall be forfeited, &c. and the President of the United States is authorized to cause any of the armed vessels of the U. S. to cruise on any part of the coast of the United States, where he may judge attempts will be made to violate the provisions of this act, and to instruct the commanders to *seize, take and bring into any port of the U. S. all such ships or vessels.*

In addition to the section of the Revenue Collection Act, of 1799, quoted above, the following extracts are from the same Act.

SECT. 98. The said revenue cutters shall, whenever the President of the U. S. shall so direct, co-operate with the navy of the U. S., during which time they shall be under the direction of the Secretary of the Navy.

SECT. 99. The officers of the said revenue cutters are hereby required and directed to go on board all ships or vessels which shall arrive within the U. S. or *within four leagues of the coast thereof*, if bound for the U. S., and *to search and examine the same, and every part thereof*, and to certify the manifests required to be on board, &c.

vessels may search her, and bring her in for adjudication; and all the slaves on board of her would, on their coming on shore, at once be free. Now, if this be so, what becomes of the doctrine that upon the high seas the right of search does not exist at all? If, indeed, the question should be whether the right should not be refused to be extended beyond the distance of four leagues, and such an article should be inserted in the convention, it would be effective, and no objection whatever could be made to it. Give Great Britain this right of search within four leagues of the coast of Africa, and what would become of the question about the "rights of nations?" The position is false. No such right exists between nations, that they shall be exempted from all right of search in time of peace. The only authority for such a position is a declaration of Sir William Scott, in the case of a French vessel called the *Louis*; but even that solitary declaration was made hypothetically, and extrajudicially; it was a mere *dictum* of that distinguished man, and not delivered in a case which he was called to decide: while, at the same time, there is another declaration of Sir William Grant, an authority fully equal to that of Sir William Scott, directly to the contrary. And this is the gentleman's authority from the law of nations.

I will take this occasion to say, in reference to the decisions of Sir William Scott, that in cases where the West India slave trade was concerned his decisions in regard to the right of search are very different from those which he was in the habit of making at the period of the French Revolution. He was then a perfect scourge to our merchants. He extended his construction of the law even to vessels under convoy, as in the case of the Swedish convoy. But as soon as the peace took place, and the West India planters' interest was concerned, his decisions were very greatly changed. I say this with no purpose of reflection on the memory of that able and upright Judge; a man with whom I formerly had the happiness to be personally acquainted. He was a highly amiable man in private life, and in conversation one of the most charming of companions. Yet, truth demands from me the declaration, that, while all the supporters of neutral rights were revolted by his decisions on the bench during the war, I have myself been quite as much so by those made since the war in cases of West India slaves. In some cases, he has gone even beyond the severity of the laws of our own Southern States; for in one case he decided that a slave who had once become free by having landed in England, if he returned to the residence of his former master returned at the same time to his bondage as a slave—which is directly contrary, as I understand, to the decisions of the courts in the slaveholding States of this Union.

I mention this to show what was the bias of Sir William Scott's mind. All such decisions, however, have since been annulled—annihilated—nullified—(I do not like that word, but here it is appropriate,) by the Universal Emancipation proclaimed by Great Britain in all her West India colonies. This opinion is now of no earthly authority. And there is nothing else extant. There is no other authority in existence for the gentleman's doctrine about the Laws of Nations. In all the discussions that have taken place on this subject, as, for instance, in the case of the schooner *Amistad*, through all the courts, the District Court, the Circuit Court, and the Supreme Court of the United States, this opinion in the case of the *Louis* was the sole authority. And in all the newspaper discussions, the decision, as it is called, of Sir William Scott, sustaining the African Slave Trade, is the eternal burden of the song; and no notice is taken of the contrary decision of Sir William Grant, a judicial authority of at least as much weight.

What have I brought this question before the committee for in this form? And why have I quoted the revenue law? To show that there is no ground whatever for this attempt to blow up a flame about the right of search; for declaring that this is a question never, never to be given up, and to make it the burden of a *pacific war speech*. [A laugh.]

I do apprehend that the noble negotiator, to whose character and merits the gentleman from Pennsylvania has paid a just and very honorable tribute, and who to me is an acquaintance of nearly half a century's standing, whom I formerly knew as a young man of distinguished ability then scarcely of age, as I had known his father with whom I was on the most friendly footing—I apprehend, I say, that this British minister will not take his instructions from the honorable

gentleman from Pennsylvania. If the mode pointed out by that gentleman is the only mode of settling the delicate and difficult questions subsisting between the two Governments, I think he will not take it. If, indeed, I could believe that the only alternative was between taking this advice to acknowledge at once that his country has been the aggressor on every one of the disputed points, and yield every thing that is demanded on every one of these questions, and a desolating bloody war, however light such a war may appear in the gentleman's eyes, (which he protests it does not, but which all his arguments show that it does,) why then should I despair of my own times, for good, and go home and die, if I could. For the gentleman may make as light of it as he pleases, this is no light question with me. Should the resort eventually be to war, I certainly have as little personal interest in it as any human being, for my career, at all events, must soon close; whatever calamities may grow out of it either to this country or to other countries, and I have learned to feel that all my sympathies ought not to be absorbed in one, however dear,) I can have no interest in them, looking to myself alone. To be sure, as to that amiable little process of the burning of London and New York, what interest other gentlemen may feel in it I cannot pretend to say—and there is many a man in this House who has a far deeper interest in it than I have or can have; but this I will say, if there is a man in this House who could hear the gentleman from Pennsylvania, with that cold indifference which animated his entire speech, (if indifference can be said to animate any thing,) put the case of the burning of the city of London as a revenge for the previous burning of the city of New York, without feeling a thrill of horror, I should wish to have little further intercourse with that man. The burning of London! and the hope of that is to be a motive for our assuming such an attitude and pursuing such a course as must infallibly bring us into a war! Would it much comfort the three hundred thousand men, women, and children who would be turned homeless in the world by the burning of New York to know that London, with a population four times as great, was to burn too? A fiend could hardly bring his mind to contemplate such a thought without horror.—Would it be nothing to the People of the United States, nothing to the civilized world, nothing to the human race, that two such cities were swept from the face of the earth? Yet the gentleman very coolly spoke of such a consummation as by no means impossible or improbable—he admitted that, in the event of a war, this might be one of the results.

[MR. INGERSOLL. What I said was, that a distinguished naval officer had assured me that it would be just as easy for us to burn London as for the British to burn New York.]

Well: and that was stated as an argument why we ought to take such a stand with Great Britain as would bring us into war with her. I suppose the naval officer who said this was himself eager for the distinction of such a deed—and distinguished he assuredly would be.

[MR. INGERSOLL. Yes, he was; and he declared that he would do it.]

Mr. A. resumé. I remember that one of our most celebrated naval officers once gave this toast, "Our country: may she be always right; but, whether right or wrong, may she be always successful." This might be a very good toast for an officer of the navy. Military men, I admit, are not bound to enter into the moral questions which may arise between nations; by their commissions they are bound to take it for granted that their country is in the right, when those departments of their government to whom the right of judging is consigned have so determined. The question of right and wrong in war is a question for such an assembly as this, not for the deck of a man-of-war. I do not therefore, disapprove of the toast as one to be taken by a naval officer; but, as a moral question, to be decided by a vote in this House within two months' time from this day, I never would adopt the sentiment. I would rather say, "Our country: may she always be successful; but, whether successful or not, may she always be in the right." That is the sentiment which I think every man should bring home to his heart on questions so weighty and so delicate as those involved in our present relations with Great Britain. If war we must have, O let us have it for the right: and let us not expect the God of battles to give us success when we are in the wrong.

I hope that the idea of our defenceless state, of which the gentleman seemed to

make so light, as being of little consequence, and as presenting no obstacle to our going to war, because, if the British burn New York, we can burn London, will be very differently viewed by this House, and that arguments of such a description will have no weight here.

Still less ought another argument which that gentleman presented to our consideration to prevail. He said that in reference to the threats by Great Britain to raise the flag of emancipation in our Southern States, that, too, was a thing to be made light of, because Great Britain herself was in a condition so precarious that her own people were as like to overturn her government as it was to injure us at the South.

I will not meet the gentleman on that question. I believe that Great Britain, like all the other powers of Europe, and more especially France, (to whom we are advised to look as our chief reliance,) is in a most precarious situation. I believe that they are all in danger of a tremendous revolution, and none so much as that very France. I must say here (and I do not know whether it will be very acceptable to this House) that if it be true, as the gentleman from Pennsylvania intimates, that the interference of our minister in France, by the publication of the pamphlet on which he bestowed so high praise, was the occasion of the refusal by France to ratify the quintuple treaty, I do not hold that proceeding in as much admiration as the gentleman does; it comes too near success in doing wrong. Her minister had signed that treaty, and the refusal to ratify it was not based in the refusal by France of the right of search, for that right she had already granted by other and independent treaties now in force. She is bound already on that subject by a special treaty. And I say that, for the sake of the moral principles which govern the intercourse and conduct of nations, France owes an explanation to the world of her refusal to ratify that treaty. If it be true that General Cass has effected this result, I, for one, do not thank him for it. Not only because he has persuaded France to break her faith and put herself in the wrong in the future controversies which may arise between her and the other parties to that treaty, but also because it looks like an intermeddling with the political affairs of Europe; it has the aspect of engaging us in entangling alliances with foreign nations, the very evil against which the venerable Washington and the venerable Jefferson both so emphatically warned their countrymen.

In Washington's Farewell Address (a paper which had lately been read in that hall, and which ought always to be read and heard with the deepest reverence) there is a paragraph expressly devoted to that subject. And Mr. Jefferson made it a sort of political motto, to have "peace, friendship, and commercial relations with all nations, but entangling alliances with none." Such has been the policy of the United States from that time to this. And I must say that the pamphlet which was put forth by our minister (of which he did me the honor to send me a copy, and which I have read with the most profound attention) has suggested to me the question as to the prudence and expediency of thus making us in any sort parties to the wars which are ahead. And I here ask this House and the country to believe that if the refusal of France to ratify the quintuple treaty shall be persevered in, (which I can scarcely believe possible,) that the right of search has not any part in the wars which may follow, and in which we are in some danger of becoming entangled. That, I say, will form no part in such wars. It is no question between France and the four powers. France has conceded it. It is her bad faith in refusing the ratification that is more likely than any thing else to embroil her with those powers, just as it happened in what was called the Syrian question. She was then on the very verge of a war, when she found, before she was aware of it, that the fleets and armies of Great Britain had settled the question for her: and she then, for the first time, gave back and signed the league.

And what will be our condition if, in consequence of the intrigues of our minister, we are involved in a European war, on the hollow pretence of this right of search? There is in the French House of Deputies, which the gentleman from Pennsylvania says was influenced by General Cass in its refusal to ratify, an interest whose constant aim is to overthrow the dynasty of Louis Phillippe, and destroy every remnant of it; a party who are much more bitterly opposed to him than any portion of either House of Congress is opposed either

to Martin Van Buren or to John Tyler. They would annihilate his family, root and branch, and for ever abolish the monarchical power he holds. I will not enter upon the question by what authority Louis Philippe holds his throne; it is not a question for this place or for this time; but I will say that France and her representative body have that question clutched between the parties which there prevail; and that, in this coming war, which it seems this pamphlet of Mr. Cass is to kindle up, I would not give a picayune for his crown. And this is the state of things in which we are invited to go to war with France for our ally!

[Mr. Ingersoll—The vote in the Chamber was nearly unanimous.]

Very well; that makes no difference. I am showing that what the party which refuses the ratification are after is not the right of search. They may throw dust in Mr. Cass's eyes, and make him believe that it is; but that is not the question, I repeat, between France and the allies; nor was it the question in the Chamber of Deputies. The gentleman says the vote was nearly unanimous; but we know what that often means, viz., that nobody votes against a thing.—But there was no *appel nominal*, (as they call it,) no polling of the Chamber.—M. Guizot saw the flame that was spreading, and he did not think it politic to oppose it. Whatever may have been the vote, be assured that France never will go to war on the question of the right of search. And suppose we have her assistance, pray of what avail will it be to us in a naval war with Great Britain, when France herself will be torn to pieces with the armies of Russia and Prussia marching on Paris? When she refused the other league, she found herself in such circumstances of danger that she thought it necessary to expend I do not know how many millions of francs in throwing a wall around Paris. And now, if she does not ratify this quintuple treaty, she may find herself in the like case—they may have to put Paris within walls again, (just as if that could save them.) What good could she do with her (fifty) steamers, I believe, and our one, against the hundred owned by Great Britain? One against a hundred—or say two. Well, that is two per cent.—rather worse than even the stock of the Bank of the United States. [A laugh.]

The gentleman has made a speech to incite us to war with England, because we may count upon the aid of France! And what good can France do us with such a burning mountain in the midst of her own territory? Threatened as she is every hour with a renewal of the scenes of her revolution, when the *Chouans*, as they were called, went roaming and ranging through the country, burning and slaying—rifling churches and breaking open nunneries, and tying the nuns and friars together to drown them, calling it “republican marriages; butchering prisoners in cold blood, and keeping the guillotine in play till the kennels literally ran down with the blood of those whom they called aristocrats—their nobles and men of property. The sort of liberty there enjoyed was a jail delivery of prisoners to a mob who surrounded the prison doors, and as the victims were set free, clove them down in the street with their *Bowie knives*. That is history; and it will be history again if the very danger which the gentleman from Pennsylvania sees should be realized. And what sort of an ally is this for the United States in a war against England?

What I say is of necessity desultory. It must be so; I was taken entirely by surprise. The gentleman's motion and his speech were alike unexpected by me. I had other topics which I intended to touch, but I have had no time to methodize.

[Here some gentleman proposed that the Committee should rise. Others said, O, no. Others cried, Go on, go on. Mr. A. proceeded.]

The gentleman from Pennsylvania talks of a war between the United States and Great Britain as a very light thing, and then gives us all his good advice in order to prevent its occurrence. And next, for the instruction of the noble negotiator who has visited our shores, he tells him how certain it is that she must be beaten because we are unarmed—such must be the consequence: it always has been. Unarmed nations always have beaten those that were armed. It is natural they should. Really, this is a discovery—not in natural history, but in the history of war—not to be found in the books.

If we are to have a war, I hope that the negotiator will not take the gentleman's advice so far as to become alarmed, and give the advice to his government

which the belief of such positions might lead to. I hope he will not give that importance to the remarks of the gentleman from Pennsylvania—to whose remarks I always attach great importance—and hope that the nation will weigh them well, and make up their minds as to the necessity of preparation. I hope he will think that the honorable gentleman has been indulging his fine imagination a little; that he has been displaying his ingenuity; that he has been speaking for the admiration of this House; or, if you please, has been making a speech for Buncombe, which means, in his case, I believe, the third district of the city of Philadelphia. [A laugh.] I hope he will conclude to give it this turn; that he will take it for granted all this is intended for the gentleman's constituents; that he is not really serious in this thing; and that, on the whole, he will conclude to go on with the negotiation just as if the speech had never been made. [Roars of laughter.]

But, suppose it should be otherwise,—suppose the British negotiator, on seeing this speech of the gentleman from Pennsylvania in the papers, and very possibly in pamphlets, and becoming aware of its deep impression on this House and this country, should conclude that war is probably to take place, and should write home to his government, giving them an account of the gentleman's speech, [renewed laughter,] and commending it to their meditations. We have had one experiment of the effect such a document may produce in England. There was, I believe, a certain report from a member of the Committee on Foreign Relations quite as warlike as the gentleman's speech, and made, too, under the same profession of a great desire for peace. Well, sir, that report, through the agency, I suppose, of the British minister here, went home to his government, and when it got to London it produced a sort of combustion of London—not that it actually burnt the city down, as the gentleman's warlike friend is to do, but it set the city in a flame. And what was the effect of it? Why, sir, our minister wrote forthwith to the valiant commander of our squadron in the Mediterranean to lose no time in getting nearer home. [Loud laughter.] Take my word for it, if the speech of the honorable gentleman, or any thing else, shall get us into a war with Great Britain, the constituents of the honorable gentleman and of other gentlemen who represent our great commercial capitalists on this floor will wish they could call to the two hundred millions worth of their floating commercial marine to get nearer home, too; but it will be then too late.

There is one consideration which ought to operate on this House, especially on those who here represent the commercial and navigating interests of this country; and that is, the difference between the Constitutions of England and this country in relation to the declaration of a war. If we go to war with Great Britain, we must do it by act of Congress. Though our ministers and our Executive officers may utter threatening words, yet, thanks be to God, they have not the power to put the country into a state of war at their pleasure, whether it will or no. Should the President and his Cabinet think with the gentleman from Pennsylvania, (Mr. Ingersoll,) or with the gentleman from Virginia, who spoke so bravely yesterday, (Mr. Wise,) still the people have reason to bless themselves that the power is not lodged with that department of the government. Meantime, we cannot commit any act of hostility until war has been regularly declared.

But how is it with Great Britain? This very envoy has only to write home a letter of five lines, saying, "I perceive that the spirit of this people is for war," and another order, secretly issued by the British privy council, expressed in five lines more, directing all naval commanders to take every American vessel they find afloat, and straightway our ships will be carried, without further delay or ceremony, into British ports, there to be, not condemned, but kept under sequestration; not confiscated, but just kept snug to abide the result of this negotiation.

[Mr. Snyder, of Pennsylvania—I hope he will write such a letter.]

And then, if we do (as the gentleman holds out to our hopes) confiscate the two hundred millions of dollars of our State debt, the British will have something to compensate them for the loss.

Am I drawing a fanciful picture? The gentleman well knows that it is a practical and sober account of just what has heretofore taken place. That is the way in which Great Britain always begins a war. Let any one look to the

past history of her proceedings, to the war of 1763, for instance. What was the complaint of France against her at that day? That her fleets swept the ocean before she had made any declaration of war. War is not there proclaimed by act of Parliament. No; an order in council to her commanders, naval or military, is all that is requisite. Are the gentleman's constituents prepared for this?

[Mr. Snyder. "Yes, yes."]

Is this one of the advantages we shall enjoy in the desired war with England, that the first notice we shall have of it is the capture of our commerce in every sea?

I am well aware that it is a very easy thing for one to get up here, and cry in loud and boastful tones, "Perish commerce, perish credit," perish every thing, but keep the nation's honor untarnished! "yield nothing, make no concession!" And if the minister of Great Britain is then to yield every thing, why that is the way to get an earldom! An earldom! an earldom for giving up the demands of his own country! Is that the spirit of John Bull? No, sir; that is not the way that earldoms are won in England. Rodney never got beyond the dignity of a viscount for doing much more than that. Nelson, it is true, did get to be an earl, and Wellington was created a duke, but it was not by surrendering any thing to any body. It is not the practice of John Bull to ennoble "sots or cowards;" the titles he bestows may possibly be fancies of the brain, unworthy the notice of a philosopher; but such as they are, they are not to be won by surrendering. There is one name in British history connected with surrendering, and it is that of Byng; and I think myself that the chance of sharing the fate of Byng is much more likely to be the fate of him who surrenders all his country demands than the possession of an earldom.

[Here Mr. A. yielded to a motion for the committee's rising, which motion prevailing, the committee rose accordingly.]

FRIDAY, April 15.

Mr. Adams, who was entitled to the floor from Thursday, rose and addressed the committee nearly as follows:

When the committee rose yesterday I was endeavoring, as much as lay in my power, to make a reply to the very extraordinary, and, to me, most unexpected and sudden introduction into this House of no less a question, in substance, than that of peace and war between this country and Great Britain, and that on so slender a peg as a motion to reduce the full Ministers to the Courts of Vienna and Berlin to the rank of *Chargés*. The preceding day had been occupied, in a manner equally sudden, with the consideration of the like question of peace and war, not with Great Britain only, but also with the empire of Mexico. These were topics solemn and painful to me, to a most extreme degree. As Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs I had hoped that the only duty I should be called to discharge in relation to these diplomatic appropriations was to sustain the estimates received from the Department of State, and to answer the resolution of this House inquiring whether the expenses of our diplomatic relations might not be lessened by the reduction of our missions to Europe and to South America? But in that expectation I have been very painfully and unexpectedly disappointed.

Now, I must premise by saying that the Committee of Foreign Relations is to be discharged from all responsibility for any remarks I may make in regard to all the topics on which I am now to speak. They had not taken into their consideration any part of those subjects. The House is well acquainted with the present composition of that committee, and with certain circumstances relating to the history of that matter. I refer to them only to say that, since the present composition of that body, no committee of this or of the other House, at any Congress since the formation of the Government, could have proceeded in the discharge of its duties with more perfect harmony. No question has agitated its deliberations so as to divide its opinion on any important point; and having been charged by them with the duty of supporting the necessity of the expenditures

estimated for by the Department—because, after full consideration, the committee all saw that there was no occasion to alter the existing number or grade of our missions abroad—I did hope that having done that, my whole duty would have been discharged. I say this, because, appearing as I do in some sort officially, as far as these appropriations are concerned, and having been suddenly called, both yesterday and now, to enter on the discussion of topics totally different, and topics which have not occupied the attention of the committee, I wish it to be understood that what I said yesterday, and what I may have occasion to say to-day, is not spoken by virtue of any instructions from the committee, but solely in my individual capacity as the Representative of one of the Congressional districts of the People of the United States. I speak on my own personal responsibility, and without the concurrence, so far as I know, of any other member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

And here I must be permitted to notify the House that, if I should manifest want of due preparation for the discussion of these great and all-important topics before this committee; if I shall exhibit a deficiency of means and of power to do justice to the cause I support, by which I mean, the cause of the peace of the country and of the world—I can only express my hope that other members of this committee, better informed and better qualified to meet, as they will have to meet, in the discussion, some of the ablest members of this body, will take the duty upon them and discharge it in a more worthy manner. My remarks must, of necessity, be very desultory, and in a great degree destitute of order and arrangement, from the entire want of time for suitable preparation.

But it is, I say, a question of peace and war which has suddenly been sprung upon this House, from two distinct and totally different quarters of the House, apparently, but which are united by ties which, perhaps, it will require considerable time to solve and unfold in the face of the world. I must take them as I find them, united in one great object, which is to involve us in a war both with Great Britain and Mexico, with the ultimate purpose of preserving and perpetuating the institution of slavery and the slave trade. This is the object of war with Mexico, as recommended to us by the gentleman from Virginia, Mr. Wise.) This is the object of war with Great Britain as recommended to us by the gentleman from Pennsylvania, (Mr. Ingersoll.) In this they are perfectly united; and there is danger to the country of an immediate war at once, with these two Powers, which must probably involve in it a war of the whole civilized portion of the human race. This is the object which they have united with all their forces to recommend.

Now, I must say that, all unexpected as it has been to me, and unprepared as I am to discuss the subject in the manner it deserves, I am not sorry, I do not regret in the slightest degree, that this subject has been brought before the House. If I have any regret upon the subject, it is that it was not brought here before; that the House has heretofore suppressed all debate on the general subject, or at least on a great part of it, when it might have been discussed under circumstances so much more favorable, at a moment when there was no negotiation pending on any subject between Great Britain and the United States within hearing of my voice. I should have been much more delighted to have gone into the discussion before any of those delicate complexities were in the way to restrain the course of argument, which I dare not now enter upon and which yet belong essentially to the subject.

It is a question of peace and war, immediate and present; the danger of war is at the doors; and here, if any man dares to raise his voice against going to war, he is immediately charged with being a *British* partisan—an *English* orator. This is not a moment in which imputations of that kind are likely to be received with indifference, more especially when negotiations are in actual progress. I should have been much more gratified to have discussed the subject at the commencement of the session, or even before that. But I must take it as it comes; and, speaking as I do as the Representative of a single district, I must say what is necessary to be said, though it should be imputed to English feeling or any other, in quarters from which I may be sure there never will come the imputation of a good purpose to any thing I can say.

When the committee rose last evening, I was endeavoring to answer some of the arguments for war made amidst professions of the most pacific spirit by the

gentlemen (the more recent of the two) who have recommended to us a war with Great Britain. And what were the points of his argument? 1. That a war would extinguish two hundred millions of our debt to England. 2. That it would enable us to burn London. And, 3. That because we were totally unprepared, therefore, this was the proper moment for beginning it. In the course of that argument he brought into view, I think, five points of controversy with England. Now, if I recollect right, there is in the city of New York a somewhat distinguished place called "the Five Points," [laughter] and really, if I were to judge of the character of the gentleman's speech from its own intrinsic merits, I should have thought that precisely the place it must have come from. [Great laughter.] The gentleman, I believe, represents a district in which there are some places somewhat like the celebrated Five Points in the city of New York.

[Mr. Ingersoll here asked leave to explain.

The Chair. Does the gentleman from Massachusetts yield the floor?

Mr. Adams. Oh yes; the gentleman may explain as much as he pleases.

Mr. Ingersoll here spoke earnestly for some minutes, but in a spot and in a position which brought his back to the reporter, and rendered it impossible to hear much of what he said. He was understood to say that the gentleman from Massachusetts had thought proper to make the most indecent allusions to his person by connecting it with the number of places which, for aught he knew, the gentleman might be in the habit of frequenting himself; but he knew that in this hall, dressed in a black gown and mounted on a cushion, the gentleman had the indecency to speak of the English nation in terms which deserved to fix upon him universal execration. Mr. I. also alluded to a letter written by Mr. A. while a public minister of peace at Ghent, in which he had spoken of his own country in terms like these: "With three frigates for a navy, and five regiments for an army, what can we expect but defeat and disgrace?" These were his expressions while his country's accredited minister to conclude peace with Great Britain.]

Mr. Adams continued. It is undoubtedly extremely apposite to the question whether our ministers to Austria and Prussia shall be exchanged for *Chargés*. Well, sir; the gentleman, in the great mildness and calmness of his temper, which is never to be ruffled by any thing, thought proper to allude to certain circumstances in my past life. I shall not reply to his remarks, because I hope to have a better use for my time. I meant no unkindness to the honorable gentleman when I spoke of his speech and observed that it might have proceeded from a place in the city of New York as moral and peaceable in its habits, and as respectable in its inhabitants, as the district which the gentleman himself represents—a district to which I made no unfriendly or disrespectful allusion, and in which I have no doubt there reside as many warm-hearted patriots, as many virtuous and upright citizens, as are to be found about the Five Points in New York. [Loud laughter.] I said that the speech was such a one as might have proceeded either from the Five Points, or from the honorable gentleman's district. If he chooses to receive this as a reflection either upon the Five Points or his own district, that is his affair; *qui capit ille facit*. The gentleman, at any rate, I consider as representing a portion of that democracy which, in a letter from Governor Clement C. Clay, of Alabama, is said to be the natural ally of the "peculiar institutions" of the South. Of that democracy I have no doubt a very large portion is to be found both at the Five Points and in the gentleman's district. And the gentleman is the representative, not of that party which, in the war of our revolution, would have made the gentleman a combatant on the side of Great Britain; not of that portion of the community which he would have represented at the time Heaven and earth were moved to prevent his confirmation as District Attorney in the other House of Congress, (by whom he was nominated to that office he knows;) not of those by whom the strongest tariff paper was sent here that ever I saw in my life; not of those he represented when he was a candidate for the appointment of Director of the Bank of the United States;—

[Mr. Ingersoll here calling on Mr. Adams for an explanation, Mr. A. replied, "I will tell the gentleman in private whenever he pleases."]

Not of that portion of them whom he represented when Gen. Jackson turned

him neck and heels out of the same office of District Attorney, and which act he generously rewarded by declaring that Gen. Jackson was "every inch a President." No, sir; many changes have come over the dream of that honorable gentleman.

[Here Mr. Ingersoll asked for the floor to explain.]

Mr. Adams. I am tired of yielding him the floor. I take this House to witness that I did not begin this examination into past history; and if it does not meet the feelings of the gentleman, he has to thank himself for it.

[Mr. Ingersoll. It suits me perfectly.]

Now he is the representative of the war party in this country--the pure democracy of the third Congressional district of the city of Philadelphia.

But, to turn from this subject to what, perhaps, more properly belongs to the discussion, and adverting to the powerful argument made by the gentleman yesterday, in which he made such an exulting, such a triumphant use of a pamphlet put forth by our minister to France, and pronounced such lofty encomiums on the correspondence of our late minister to the Court of St. James, which was let off like a Parthian shaft, when he was just about to fly—a shaft which he let off just after he had given his admonition to our commander that it was time to get nearer home; the courage and spirit of which the gentleman so warmly admired, though darted at the British minister at the very moment he who sent it was on the point of departure to get out of harm's way himself. In commenting on the pamphlet of Gen. Cass, (of whom I shall always speak with due respect and honor,) I said that the very fact for which the gentleman so much admired it excited any thing but admiration in me; because I considered it as an interference with the internal affairs of France, under color of sounding the tocsin of alarm against a concession of the right of search. I said it was, in fact, a tocsin against the crown of Louis Phillippe, and that, if its effect should be to produce a war between France and the other four powers who had signed the quintuple treaty, under the false pretence of objecting to the right of search, we should find ourselves totally deceived; for that the right of search was not at all involved in the refusal of the Chamber of Deputies to assent to the ratification of that treaty.

It has so happened that this very morning I have seen a letter directly from France, containing an account of that very debate, from which I will now read, in order to show the correctness of the positions I took, that the right of search was not the ground of the decision, that being not a question between France and the four powers, but that it was a movement hostile to the reigning dynasty of France. The letter begins thus:

PARIS, January 30, 1842.

"Louis Phillippe continues his unrelenting hostility to the press. It made him what he is. Royal gratitude shows itself by persecuting it. Charles the Tenth wanted to gag the press, and lost his throne; let us see if Louis Phillippe will be more fortunate in the long run."

Does not this passage expressly show what is the present condition of that dynasty, at the head of which stands Louis Phillippe?—the danger by which he is surrounded—the immense mass of prejudice and passion which is accumulated against him? Does it not show what confidence is to be reposed in laws and treaties proceeding from such a source? and what sort of an inducement it is for us to go to war with England that we shall have a power like this for our ally? The letter then proceeds to relate the fact that a certain officer in the National Guards had been dismissed for certain reflections on the government published by him in a newspaper, and of his re-election by his own company in defiance of this act of government, and presents this fact in proof of the great unpopularity of Louis Phillippe. The letter goes on to say that "Thiers, in the debate on the address, has been speaking all manner of hard things against England." This Thiers is the democrat whose great object is the overthrow of the throne of Louis Phillippe to open the way to the introduction of a democratic form of government. This was the man who was for going to war with the four powers on the Syrian question, in consequence of which he lost his place. This man, it seems, had been speaking all manner of harsh things against England. Had the two gentlemen from Pennsylvania and Virginia been studying in the same school?

This seems a pretty good account of one of these speeches. And here I will take occasion to say, that speaking all manner of hard things against any foreign nation is no very good instrument of negotiation for peace. If we doubt this, let us only for a moment bring the case to ourselves. Should we, if a British minister should come to this country and openly say all manner of hard things against us, consider that as a proper mode to aid him in a successful negotiation with this government? It may be said that we have given no occasion for hard things to be spoken of us, and I hope it is true that we have given as little occasion as others. But if we are to take our own opinion of each other, as a just standard of judgment, if we are to be guided, for instance, by what one-half of this House says of the other half, (and in this I have no reference to particular parties,) we cannot complain should very hard things indeed be said of us. In this present debate, frequent mention has been made of the head of the Mexican government; and he has been called on this floor little else than a merciless tyrant, an upstart, a usurper, and the like. This may be a very good means to adopt, if the object is to go to war with Mexico; but I should scarcely consider it a likely mode of preserving amicable relations with that power.

And here I beg that I may not be misunderstood nor represented as making a Santa Anna speech, which I have no doubt I shall be, and I do not know but that it may also be said that General Santa Anna knows the proper means to propitiate members of this House. General Hamilton, at least, thought that there were certain means of propitiating him, which, when tried, did not prove quite as effective as he had anticipated. I profess no special regard for General Santa Anna. He may, for aught I know, be a merciless tyrant. I certainly do not much approve of some of his exploits in war, and still less his negotiations here at the White House some four or five years ago. I wish I could know more of what passed in that negotiation, and I should be very glad if this House would call for the correspondence which took place between a late President of the United States and General Santa Anna when he was here. That there was a negotiation of some kind has not only been acknowledged by Santa Anna himself, but a letter of President Houston to him has caused me still more to wish to know what its nature was. Nor do I believe that the true relations of this country either with Texas or with Mexico can be rightly understood without this; and yet if I were to offer a resolution calling for that information, some gentleman from Mississippi or Alabama would instantly start up and object, when it must lie over under the rule, and would descend to the tomb of the Capulets. Could I have an assurance that no such result would follow, I promise you I would offer such a resolution at once.

But to return. This Monsieur Thiers said all manner of hard things against England, and, if he can get France into a war, he is himself to be the Minister of Louis Philippe. Then what will happen to France no man knows, and sorry am I to say that what will probably happen to this country, if she shall be allied to France, I cannot look upon with satisfaction as a "member of the Peace party."

The letter then goes on to say of the discourse of M. Thiers: "His harangue excited great interest, not from its eloquence or wisdom, but because it is believed that it spoke the sentiments of the war party, *which is headed by the Duke of Orleans.*"

This opens up to us a view of the real source of the present parties in France. This Duke of Orleans, as the eldest son of the King, is the presumptive heir of the Crown. He is head of the war party in the nation, as Mons. Thiers is in the House of Deputies. He wants war, and what he wants it for I stated yesterday. There are intestine divisions in that country. Here we see the heir of the Crown conspiring against his father, probably thinking, as his grandfather did before him, that, instead of conducting him to the guillotine, it will bring him to the Crown. In war he anticipates the opportunity of displaying his talents as a military commander, of fighting battles and winning fields, and by military renown securing his passage to the throne:

"The quintuple slave trade treaty was attacked by Thiers, and then an amendment was moved. The Royal speech contained this paragraph: 'I am endeavoring, at the same time, by negotiations prudently conducted, to extend our commercial relations, and to open new markets for the productions of our soil and of our arts.'"

"The address echoed this sentence, and M. Billault proposed, as an amendment, the following: 'The prudence of the Government is a guaranty that in the arrangements relative to the repression of a culpable traffic, our Government will carefully protect the legitimate interests of our maritime commerce and the complete independence of our flag against all foreign attempts.'"

That is the amendment in which is couched the effect of Gov. Cass's pamphlet. Is there any thing there about the right of search? Not a word. How could there be? France is already committed. She is bound to Great Britain to admit the right—bound by express treaty stipulations, and has been for ten years past. The amendment could not even glance at what was its real object, viz., to induce France to break her faith. No; but this was the mask which was held up there and is held up here for going to war.

The letter writer proceeds:

"It was finally arranged that the amendment should run thus: 'The Chamber hoped that the Government, in still concurring in measures for the suppression of the slave trade, would still know how to preserve from injury the interests of French commerce and the independence of our flag.'"

This is still more guarded, still more remote from the question of the right of search.

"Remember," says the writer, "to understand the *animus* of this amendment, that the new European treaty for the suppression of the slave trade mutually grants the right of search at sea."

The *animus* of the amendment, its true intent, is so little apparent that it must be pointed out.

"Thiers argued that the English cruisers on the Guinea coast are kept there chiefly for the sake of disturbing the French trade, that the *prevention* of the slave trade was inhuman"—

Yes, that the prevention of the slave trade was inhuman. There is Thiers's argument, openly advanced in the face of the world: Here is the *animus*, indeed! Here the cat is let out of the bag. The object of the resolution, its true intent, is to preserve and perpetuate the slave trade; and now, let this committee, let this House, let this country reflect what are the principles really involved in all this blustering about the right of search. The object at the bottom of it all is the *restoration and preservation of the AFRICAN SLAVE TRADE*. He gives his reasons:

"—as it sometimes led to whole cargoes of slaves being cast into the sea to prevent capture, and that the treaty of 1833 (made when himself was Minister of Commerce!) was illegal, as it confiscated all vessels which were proved to carry slaves."

There is the argument of M. THIERS.

"M. BILLAULT strongly denounced the English claim to 'the right of search.' They have claimed it, as an attribute of the sovereignty of the seas, for more than a century. In war it was natural they should push it; in peace, he contended, England had claimed it under the pretext of philanthropy. In 1830 this same 'right of search' had been conceded by France, and insisted on ever since by England. However, America did not concede the point, and England was using the anti-slave trade treaty as a cloak to carry this point. The freedom of the seas was involved in this question. France might concede it, but he anticipated that before long the United States would dispute the sovereignty of the seas with England in every quarter of the globe."

If claiming the right of search under the pretext of philanthropy is a proof of hypocrisy, we were ourselves the first to give it, for we were once zealous in the prevention of the slave trade; but now we have done away with all that. As the French anatomist says, in one of Moliere's plays, "The heart used to be on the left side, but now we have changed all that, and the heart is on the right side." Yes, I hope we shall ever maintain the freedom of the seas. I adhere to that, as I ever did. It is a part of the freedom of the land; it is a part of the great question of human liberty. I admit that the claim of England to the sovereignty of the seas is an evil to be resisted by all the other nations of the earth. Our contest is for the freedom of the seas, not for the sovereignty of the seas.

M. GUIZOT made an important reply. M. Jacques Lefebvre's amendment (the second one above) was a censure on the slave trade treaty of 1841, and was meant to oppose any extension of the treaties of 1831 and 1833. The Minister defended all the treaties, and said what those of 1831 and 1833 had done was to consider human flesh as contraband of war."

The gentleman from Pennsylvania said that the determination of the Chamber was nearly unanimous, on which I yesterday remarked that this unanimity is often only apparent, and a vote is sometimes recorded as unanimous when there is perhaps not even a majority in its favor. But what says M. Guizot?

"They did nothing more and nothing less; they assimilated the crime of the slave trade to that of contraband of war. The sea remained free as before; there was only one more crime added to the code of nations, and there were nations which in common wished to repress this crime. And on the day in which *all* nations shall have taken this engagement, the crime of slave trade will disappear; on that day the men who have pursued that noble aim through political storms and party battles, will be honored in the world; and I hope that my name will appear among those."

[The word I have italicised was taken to reflect on the United States.]

The word italicised is the word "*all*"—"when *all* nations shall have taken this engagement, the crime of the slave trade will disappear." This was considered as glancing at the United States, as the only civilized nation that now resisted the right of search for the suppression of the slave trade. He hints that we stand alone among the community of nations; but says that when we, with the rest, shall concur in granting the right, then slavery will disappear.

Now, I entreat the members of this committee to remember that I am not for conceding the right of search. I repeat it. I cannot consent to it even for the suppression of the slave trade; because I believe that other expedients can be formed to accomplish that object without this resort; and because, in the correspondence of the British Minister with Mr. Stevenson, I see no demand for such concession. On the contrary, the right to search our ships is expressly disclaimed by Great Britain. We may, indeed, be called upon to aid her in the suppression of the slave trade by the services of a part of our naval force, but this we can do without conceding the right of search.

"What he also said will be read with great interest in America. Here we have M. Guizot decidedly vindicating England and condemning the United States by implication. I give the very words. M. Guizot said: 'I wish it were in my power to induce the United States to become a party to the convention, for my success would do honor to my country, *and render a great service to humanity*;' but God forbid that the slightest constraint should be used in order to compel any nation to become a party to the treaty. The United States are free, and will remain free. *On the day when they shall have acceded to the conventions, they will have performed a noble work*, for they will then have accomplished the abolition of the trade in the whole world; but do not let it be imagined for a moment that the freedom of the seas will be involved in this question. That will remain as it was. The slave trade has no connexion with the question of the freedom of the seas; for, like piracy, this traffic is excluded from all common right. It has been assimilated also to the recognised right which exists in the case of the contraband of war. Are you willing that the traffic in human flesh should be treated with the rigor which, in the case of the contraband trade of war, is admitted by all the world? And does this exception to the great principle of the freedom of the seas affect that principle? No, gentlemen; on the contrary, the principle is rendered more sacred by the exception.'

"The implication is, that America must be charged with inhumanity *until* you accede to the Anti-Slave Trade Convention."

"The amendment was carried: Ministers choosing to adopt it, rather than run the risk of defeat on the original motion."

There: there is the explanation of that unanimity, or approach to unanimity, of which the gentleman from Pennsylvania made, or attempted to make, so much yesterday.

But now, as I do not wish to intrude on the attention of this committee a single moment longer than is necessary, I will pass over the rest of what I might say on this subject, and recur in a few observations to the other war trumpet which we have heard within the last two days.

They unite in one purpose, though they seem to be pursuing it by different means. The gentleman from Virginia, (Mr. Wise,) confining his observations to our relations with Mexico, also urges us to war with the same professions of a disposition for peace as were so often repeated by the gentleman from Pennsylvania in regard to Great Britain. He does not immediately connect the questions of war with Mexico and war with Great Britain, but apparently knows and feels that they are in substance and in fact but one and the same question; and that, so surely as we rush into a war with Mexico, we shall

shortly find ourselves in a war with England. The gentleman appeared entirely conscious of that, and I hope that no member of this committee will come to the conclusion that it is possible for us to have a war with Mexico, without, at the same time, going to war with Great Britain. On that subject I will venture to say that the Minister from England has no instructions. That is not one of the five points on which the gentleman from Pennsylvania tells us our controversy with England rests; and the surrendering of which is to open to that Minister so easy a road to an earldom. The war with Mexico is to be produced by different means and for different purposes. I think the gentleman from Virginia in his speech rested the question of the war with Mexico on three grounds: 1st. That our citizens had claims against the Mexican Government to the amount of ten or twelve millions; 2d. That some ten or twelve of our citizens had been treated with great severity and suffered disgrace and abuse from the Mexican Government, having been made slaves and compelled to work at cleansing the streets; that these citizens were detained in servitude, while one British subject had been promptly released on the first demand of the British Minister there; and 3d, That a war with Mexico would accomplish the annexation of Texas to the Union. The gentleman was in favor of war, not merely for the abstract purpose of annexing Texas to the Union, but he was for war by peremptorily prohibiting Santa Anna from invading Texas. I will take up these reasons in order.

And first, as to going to war for the obtaining of these ten or twelve millions of dollars, being the claims of our own citizens on Mexico. This seems a very extraordinary reason, when, according to the doctrine of the gentleman from Pennsylvania, a state of war at once extinguishes all national debts. If we go to war with Mexico, her debts to our citizens will be spunged at once, if the doctrine of the gentleman from Pennsylvania be true. He did, to be sure, qualify the position by saying that war would at least suspend the payment of interest. If so, then it would equally suspend interest in the case of Mexico. The arguments of the two war gentlemen happened to cross each other, though they are directed to the same end. One of them will have us to go to war with Mexico to recover twelve millions of dollars; the other would have us to go to war with England to wipe out a debt of two hundred millions. I will not compare the arguments of the two gentlemen together, but I will say in regard to the doctrine of the gentleman from Pennsylvania that it has quite too much of repudiation in it for my creed. I do not think that a war with England would extinguish these two hundred millions, but that, on the contrary, Great Britain would be likely to say to us, we will go to war to recover the money you owe us. That is one of the questions which we must settle if we go to war, but which we might otherwise, at least for a time, stave off. But, if we go to war, what must be the effect of the peace that follows? We must pay our two hundred millions, with the interest. As to our debt from Mexico, I believe the way to recover it is not to go to war for it; for war, besides failing to recover the money, will occasion us the loss of ten times the amount in other ways.

As to war producing a suspension of interest on a national debt, let the gentleman look back a little to the wars of France. In 1793 France was at war with almost all the countries of Europe, and she immediately confiscated all her debts to them. But what happened thirty years after, when the re-action came? The Allies took Paris, and in the settlement which then took place they compelled France to pay all her debts, with full interest on the whole period during which payment had been suspended. That was the consequence to France of going to war to extinguish debts. And if we go to war with Great Britain tomorrow, she will make us, as one of the conditions of peace, pay our whole debt of 200 millions, with interest. And what shall we gain? Spend millions upon millions every year as long as the war continues: and unless it is greatly successful, have to pay our debt at last, principal and interest. This would depend on the chances of war, or the issue of battle. And as our contests would be chiefly on the ocean, we must first obtain a superiority on the seas before we can put her down and vanquish her; and this to save ourselves from the payment of 200 millions justly due from our citizens to hers!

I have seen a letter from the Governor of Mississippi in defence of the repudiation of debts by the Legislature of that State: an operation, the justice of

which one of her Representatives here (Mr. THOMPSON) endeavored to explain to the satisfaction of this House and the country. The letter of the Governor gives an account of the motives of the people of Mississippi for repudiating: and the Governor in that letter says that he expects the subject will be made a matter of negotiation between Great Britain and the United States, and thinks it will present a very delicate question.

[Mr. THOMPSON here was desirous of obtaining the floor for an explanation, but what he said could not be distinctly heard.

Mr. ADAMS. I say that it is true: I have myself seen the letter, and read it.

Mr. THOMPSON. There must be some mistake; because no part of the debts (and I have examined and traced them all) is due to the people of England.

Mr. ADAMS. I speak of a letter which has been published in all the papers of the country; it is signed with the name of Governor McNutt, and never has been contradicted so far as I know. He says that he expects the matter will be a subject of negotiation; and adds that a great majority of the people of Mississippi would sooner go to war than yield to the payment of the debt. I cannot take the assertion of the gentleman that there is a mistake as sufficient evidence against a document which I have seen in various papers, uncontradicted.*

Mr. THOMPSON here repeated his explanation. The Governor could not have expected that debts would be made the subject of negotiation with England, not one dollar of which was owing to any British subject.]

Mr. ADAMS. Well; it is possible the letter does not name the foreign Power with whom the negotiation is to be held. He says that he expects it to become a subject of negotiation. I will not undertake to say that he actually names Great Britain, nor is it material; the principle is there; the People would rather go to war than consent to pay their debts. I shall not enter on the subject of the propriety or expediency of the Legislature of Mississippi repudiating their State debt; but the gentleman from Pennsylvania and the gentleman from Virginia both made this a question, in their arguments for war. The gentleman from Virginia says we must go to war with Mexico to recover the ten or twelve millions due by her, and the gentleman from Pennsylvania tells us that if we will only go to war with England we shall at one dash sponge our whole debt of two hundred millions. Now, in reference to moral principles, I must say that I prefer the doctrine of the gentleman from Virginia. I had rather, if I must go to war, do it to recover a just debt, than to sponge a debt justly due. I make a deep distinction between the moral principle of the gentleman from Virginia and the moral principle (if moral it can be called) of the gentleman from Pennsylvania. I speak of it as a matter of fact. Both gentlemen make motives for war out of the debts due to us or from us. But I am now replying more particularly to the argument of the gentleman from Virginia. I am not willing to go to war for the recovery of the ten or the twelve millions of dollars due us by Mexico. I think it not justifiable to do so; and, if I am in favor of retaining a full minister at that court, it is precisely for the reason that I am for conducting a pacific negotiation for that debt, and not for going to war to recover it. I am therefore for a pacific mission to Mexico. I am for staving off as long as possible the final right of the Government of the United States to assume a threatening tone in order to recover this debt. That time, I think, has not arrived. When it shall arrive, there will be no occasion for a special mission, but for raising money, a thousand fold more than the whole amount of the debt, in order to obtain right and justice. Going to war with Mexico, even though it should present to us the tempting advantage of robbing churches and priests, would not be my mode for recovering our debt. I do not think it the proper remedy, and that is one of the reasons why I am for retaining the full mission.

* The National Intelligencer, of Dec. 2, 1841, contains a letter of Gov. McNutt to the editor of the Richmond Enquirer, dated Jackson, Miss., Nov. 10, 1841, of which the following is an extract:

"Our Senator, ROBERT J. WALKER, and our Representatives, GWINN and THOMPSON, sustain me in the position I have taken. A demand will probably be made on the Government of the United States for the payment of the bonds referred to. This will raise an exciting and perplexing question. This State has defined her position, and will maintain it. I firmly believe that four-fifths of the people of this State PREFER GOING TO WAR TO PAYING THE BONDS.

There is a second reason given by the gentleman from Virginia in favor of war. He reminds us, with great warmth, that there are some ten or twelve citizens of the United States now prisoners in the city of Mexico, and dragging chains about the streets of that city; that a British subject taken with them has been liberated while they are kept in bondage. Now, if I am correctly informed, one American citizen, a son of General Combs, has been liberated on the application of the Minister of the United States, who was as fairly a subject of imprisonment as the British subject of whom the gentleman speaks. I certainly have no objections to our Minister's making such representations as he can in favor of the release of citizens of the United States, although taken in actual war against Mexico in association with Texian forces; but I am not prepared to go to war to obtain their liberation. I must first be permitted to ask, how is it that these men happen to be in the streets of Mexico? Is it not because they formed part of an expedition, got up in Texas against the Mexican city of Santa Fe? Were they not taken *flagrante bello*, actually engaged in a war which they had nothing to do with, to which the United States were no party? In all this great pity and sympathy for American citizens, made to travel hundreds of miles barefoot and in chains, the question "how came they there?" seems never to be asked. And yet, so far as the interposition of this nation for their recovery is concerned, that is the very first question to be asked. It was a regular warlike expedition, got up by the President of the republic of Texas for conquest within the Mexican territory, the object being, no doubt, to secure to Texas the possession of the sources of the Rio del Norte, for Santa Fe is situated at the source of that river. The State of Texas has never explicitly declared her boundaries, so that they are not exactly known; but, whatever they are, they are no bounds to them, for President Houston has declared that he means to transcend them, and to push on into Mexico; and the gentleman from Virginia tells us that if Houston does not do it, he himself is ready to go and plant his standard on the lofty summit of that city. [A laugh.]

Well, sir, this same President of Texas has done another thing. I do not know whether it is likely to bring us into difficulty with him, for really the symptoms among us are such that it seems he will be allowed to do any thing. He has proclaimed a blockade of the ports of Mexico. Now, a blockade must have the effect of cutting off our trade with those ports. Not a vessel of the United States can approach the port of Vera Cruz, but she will be stopped and turned back, to the total derangement of her voyage and the probable ruin of her owner, and that under this paper blockade. The two States are at war; and the most recent act of hostility is this expedition against Santa Fe with a view to conquer and attach it to the territory of Texas. From our own valley of the Mississippi, on whose valiant and enterprising sons the gentleman from Virginia pronounced so high a panegyric, and whose high-souled patriotism is so strongly stimulated by the prospect of robbing priests and pillaging churches, [a laugh,] ten or twelve persons, in the ardor of their disinterested zeal for liberty, joined this Texian expedition against a part of the dominions of Mexico; but fortune did not smile upon the enterprise. I have heard of no very valiant exploits achieved by their arms; but, on the contrary, the moment they came in actual contact with the Mexican authorities, weak as they are, they laid down their arms and became prisoners of war at discretion. They were treated as Mexico treats her prisoners of war. I do not undertake to justify that course of treatment; but I will say, that if our Minister to Mexico has received instructions imperatively to demand their release, and, if that shall be refused, to come immediately home, what will be the consequences? I hope the consequences will be to save to the Treasury a little of his salary as minister: any other consequence than this I earnestly deprecate. If, however, he does come back, I confess I shall not regret it; for, even after the high eulogium bestowed upon his character and qualifications by the gentleman from Virginia, if my opinion were asked, I should still say that I prefer that some other individual should occupy the post. I say nothing in opposition to the eloquent panegyric pronounced upon the individual: my reasons are, that, upon the questions in controversy between Mexico and this country, I know that his views are such as will not be very likely to perpetuate a state of peace between the two countries, or very advantageous to the union of these States as now constituted. On a subject col-

lateral to, if not identical with, that union, I have had some experience of the sentiments entertained by him, by the gentleman from Virginia, and by another gentleman, from Maryland, who I do not now see in his place, (supposed to be Mr. W. C. JOHNSON,) who fastened upon this House that execrable 21st rule, which is fast driving this Union to its dissolution. I say this without hesitation. A rule which has created more dissension and more ill blood than all other measures adopted in this House, and which is leading a large portion of the People of this country to approximate towards the opinion that even an open dissolution of the Union would be better than the state of things in which we now live. As to the talents of the gentleman in debate, I, too, have known him on this floor; and, perhaps, the gentleman from Virginia may say of me, as he said of my excellent friend from Vermont, that I, also, have great reason to appreciate the gallant valor of his friend from South Carolina. Sir, his friend threatened me with the penitentiary once—[roars of laughter;] that is the greatest exploit of his valor that I am acquainted with. I have met him in this House, and from what I have witnessed here I should give it as my opinion that my friend from Vermont is more than a match for him; and I would say so to his face if he were here. Whether or not I have felt the power of his lance I leave posterity and the world to say. At the same time, I disclaim all feelings of unkindness toward the gentleman in question. I must say that in the private and individual relations of society there is not a man in this House with whom I have had more friendly intercourse during the whole time of his continuance here, even within three days after he had threatened me with the penitentiary. [A laugh.]

I beg the gentleman from Virginia distinctly to understand that if he means to apply the remarks he made as to his friend, our present Minister to Mexico, being so very terrific a champion in this House, I have never felt the dread which the gentleman thinks he was calculated to inspire. I met him on his station here. I never was afraid to meet him. I appreciated and respected his talents, and I have sometimes lamented the influence he exerted in the House. I have often differed from him, but he never assumed the airs of that superiority which here seems to be claimed for him by his friend from Virginia; and I hold it scandalous for any gentleman in this House to assume to speak of any other as dreading a fellow member upon the floor. I know nothing of such dread. I speak of the Minister to Mexico, as I would speak of him if he were here, and as I am in the habit of speaking on all occasions. It does not befit my spirit, and I hope it never will befit the spirit of any of those representing that part of the country from which I come, to meet any man here under a spirit of slavish inferiority. I hold in disgust every thing like the assumption of superiority, or the exaction of personal deference in a body like this. I meet gentlemen here in open debate, and I speak my mind, sometimes perhaps too strongly, instigated it may be by a momentary feeling of irritation which soon passes over, and which I am afterwards the first to regret; but the gentleman from Virginia has never seen me flinch from meeting him on a footing of perfect equality, or any other member of this House, past or present.

But there is one observation which I feel called upon to make at this time, and which I make most unwillingly; and that is, that heretofore, when our present Minister to Mexico was a member of this House, and also very recently, within but four days past, it has happened that members from two sections of this Union are not permitted to stand on the same footing whenever what are called the rights of the South are involved. I refer more particularly to the case of my friend from Vermont, (Mr. SLADE,) who rose here and proceeded to speak most perfectly in order, if any such thing as order does exist, but was arrested for touching upon what are called the peculiar institutions of the Southern States, and was compelled, by a decision of the Chair, to take his seat.

At witnessing that decision I was greatly afflicted, for I had been so much entertained and so much instructed too by the remarks of my friend, that I felt persuaded, had he been permitted to proceed, he would have continued to enlighten us by remarks strictly to the purpose. Yet within half an hour afterwards the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WISE) rose and almost immediately broached the same subject of slavery, and was permitted, without let or interruption, to pursue the whole range of argument he chose to adopt in regard to it. (And for saying

this I do not know but I may be arrested and ordered to take my seat, and not to touch upon the subject of slavery.) I, for one, am not disposed to submit to that inequality any longer. I have witnessed it too long, and in a great variety of forms; but I have always resisted it, and I hope that a sufficient number will here be found resolved to submit to it no longer, but determined to maintain their rights upon this floor; and that, if put down here by the force of numbers, they will make their appeal to the justice of the nation.

I must ask pardon of the House for the desultory character of these remarks. It was said by one of the principal speakers of ancient times, as an apology for having detained a public assembly by a long speech, that he "had not had time to make it shorter." I may say the same thing now. If I had had the requisite time for preparation, I should have endeavored to condense and methodize what I say; but as such is not the fact, I must be permitted to hope that the House will bear with me.

The second reason in favor of war, put forth by the gentleman from Virginia, I say, is no reason at all. I am willing that our Minister should present a modest sober solicitation to the Government of Mexico, for the release of such of our citizens as were taken in the act of marching to invade the Mexican territory under the standard of Texas. But I would not make it a ground of war with Mexico, if her Government should reply, "Your citizens thought proper to join themselves with the forces of Texas, and have exposed themselves to even worse treatment than they have received." And, if they did say so, they might refer to the case of two British subjects by the names of Arbuthnot and Ambrister, who once interfered in a certain war between the United States and Seminole Indians, carried on, not in our own territory but on a foreign territory. In that case these men, Arbuthnot and Ambrister, were not brought to this city of Washington, to traverse our streets in chains; they were not exposed to the severity of travelling barefoot for hundreds of miles. No; a course much more summary was observed in their case; they were tried by a court martial, and one of them being a young man, scarcely of age, the court were disposed to let the prisoners off with a punishment comparatively mild, and the court so found; but what did General Jackson do? He struck his pen across that line in the finding of the court, and they were both hung up. I never complained of that decision of General Jackson, though there were many others who did. I did not, indeed, specifically defend or support the act, in itself considered, but as a national question between us and Spain, and between us and Great Britain, whose subjects they were. The ground I took by the order of my Government, not so much to justify the act as to put off the ground of claim by Great Britain, was, that these individuals had intermeddled in a war they had nothing to do with; in a war not between us and Great Britain, but between us and certain Indian tribes, and that if they choose thus to expose themselves they must abide the consequences. It was a question of the same character as that on which we are now asked to go to war. I did sustain, as a question of national law, the right of Gen. Jackson to treat them as he did: and the Minister of Great Britain at that time, Lord Castlereagh, told our Minister, Mr. Rush, that they had concluded to pass it over, after many anxious consultations held by the British Privy Council. But, he said, If I had but lifted my finger, you would have had to answer that act of Gen. Jackson by war. In that case there was quite as much to be said for Great Britain, had she taken up the quarrel for the hanging of these two British subjects, as for us if we should go to war for the ten or twelve citizens of the United States taken in the expedition to Santa Fe. I say again, if the Government has ordered our Minister to Mexico peremptorily to demand the release of the American citizens now held as prisoners of war, and in case of refusal to come home, as a signal of the purpose of this country to pursue the demand by a resort to war, they have gone beyond what is right, and, as I believe, have gone beyond their power.

I say, further, that, in my judgment, we have adopted too menacing a tone in our negotiations with that Power. I speak not, of course, with certainty, for I do not positively know; but I do say, if our Minister has been ordered to return on the condition I have stated, the Government have transcended their power; I say, further, that the Executive department is not authorized to threaten any foreign nation with war, because they have no power to proclaim war, and be-

cause that power is among the most precious powers held by this and the other House of Congress, who, under the Constitution, are made trustees of the war power of the nation—the most solemn trust that can be committed to human hands. It becomes this House to vindicate its own authority, and to let the Executive department know that it is not for them to threaten foreign Governments with war. If a war is coming, and especially if there is immediate danger of its occurrence, and if the Executive is apprized of the fact, it is his duty to inform Congress, and especially this House, of such a state of things, and refer to them the terrific question of authorizing war—a question involving, whenever it comes, the lives, the fortunes, and the happiness of millions. If instructions of the kind I have mentioned have been given, I shall much regret it, though I shall not be displeased that the present Minister shall return.

I come now to the third ground for war urged by the gentleman from Virginia. And I hope I do not misrepresent him when I say that I understood him to affirm that if he had the power he would prohibit the invasion of Texas by Mexico, and if Mexico would not submit to such a requirement, and should persist in her invasion, he would go to war. The gentleman stated, as a ground for war, that Santa Anna had avowed his determination “to drive slavery beyond the Sabine.” That was what the gentleman from Virginia most apprehended—that slavery would be abolished in Texas—that we should have neighbors at our door not contaminated by that accursed plague spot. He would have war with Mexico sooner than slavery should be driven back to the United States, whence it came! If that is to be the avowed opinion of this committee, in God’s name let my constituents know it—the sooner it is proclaimed upon the housetops the better. The House is to go war with Mexico for the purpose of annexing Texas to this Union. Yes; and the gentlemen produced, as a triumphant authority (not indeed in his eyes, for he has not been in the habit of regarding the source of it with much respect, but still as good authority,) a document from a former Administration, intended by him to justify the existing Executive in proclaiming that he was resolved to do all in his power for the annexation of Texas. Yes, a predecessor of the present incumbent, even myself, for want of better authority, was referred to, and alleged to have entertained the same feeling, the same disposition for the acquisition of this territory.

The gentleman was so good as to send me two letters written by a distinguished gentleman now in my eye, then Secretary of State, to our Minister at the Court of Mexico; I have not had time to read them over. [A voice: “The extracts are given in the *Intelligencer*.”] From those letters the gentleman caused certain extracts to be read, with a view to prove that in 1825 and again in 1827 instructions had been given to propose to the Mexican Government a cession of the territory of Texas to the Rio del Norte, and a sum of money was to be offered in consideration. I thank him for citing this paper; it is a correct document. I had myself, in the negotiation of our treaty with Spain, labored to get the Rio del Norte as our boundary, and I adhered to the demand till Mr. Monroe and all his Cabinet directed me to forego it, and to assent to take the Sabine.

And now I repeat what I have said before, that before the treaty was signed it was carried by me, at the command of Mr. Monroe, to Gen. Jackson, who, after examining it with the map in his hand, approved of the Sabine as the boundary. That fact was contested, with the usual candor of the organ of the administration, and it was declared that a member of the House went to General Jackson, in person, and he recollected nothing of the matter. I then sent for the document in which the fact was put down in writing at the time, and though it was not published in the papers, it was sent to Mr. Van Buren for his inspection, and after looking at it he became satisfied that it was true. Perhaps this is not a material fact; I used it as an answer to the gentleman from Virginia to show that I did not originally negotiate the treaty with the present boundary of the Sabine. I maintained my demand for the Rio del Norte till Mr. Monroe and his Cabinet overruled me and assented to the Sabine. But at that time Texas was a wilderness with no population, or at least no American population. I do not believe there were 5,000 people in the whole territory, and they were Spanish subjects. In the course of negotiation, and after the terms of the treaty had been concluded, the first American project for the settlement of the

country was brought into being. I received a very long letter from Moses Austin, I think his name was Moses, (father of Stephen Austin,) stating that his object was to make a settlement in the wilderness. He was a sort of a Boon; and he proposed to collect in the midst of New England as large a colony as he could, and with them to go into Texas and settle the country. That was the state of things under which I was in favor of annexation.

When my proposition was made to the Mexican Government in 1825, slavery had been abolished in that territory. There was not a slave there, nor was there the least reason to expect there ever would be. There existed therefore no reason why I should be averse to the annexation of this new region to the territory of the Union. Had it been annexed, it would have been settled by freemen. I should certainly have had no objection to that, nor do I know that I should object now, if it were brought within the scope of possibility. I should not indeed desire it, because I think we have quite enough territory already. We have certainly as much as we can manage. But even as territory, it is not desirable. I should not wish it to form a part of the Union, even if it were settled with freemen, and were a free State, as I would have wished it in 1825 or 1827. Slavery was then abolished, and if Texas had come into the Union, there would have been no power in the United States to restore it. Does the gentleman from Virginia think that because, under such circumstances, I wished to see the annexation at that time, that this is an argument either to show the expediency of its annexation now, or any inconsistency in me because I am now utterly opposed to it.

[Mr. Wise here asked liberty to explain, and Mr. Adams having yielded the floor, Mr. Wise said, I rise to ask the gentleman a question.]

Mr. Adams. No, sir: no questions. Explain, if you please.

Mr. Wise. I wish to ask him if he did not instruct our Minister to protest against the abolition of slavery in Mexico.

Mr. Adams. (With vehemence.) No, sir! never!

Mr. Wise. Not while the gentleman was President?

Mr. Adams. No, sir! never!

Mr. Wise. It is so charged.]

Mr. Adams. As to charges, I hope the gentleman does not expect me to answer them. I never could have protested against the abolition of slavery in Mexico or any where else. I have said that I was not prepared at this time to vote for abolishing slavery in the District of Columbia, and I have offended numbers of my constituents by repeating that declaration; but that is a different thing. But even if I could have protested against the abolition of slavery after it had been instituted, still if my voice could be heard either here or in Texas, or in any other part of the civilized or the savage world, I would have protested from the bottom of my soul against its restoration, and that is the insurmountable reason why I never will consent to the annexation of Texas to the United States. I would not take the territory if it were ten thousand times more valuable than it is, sullied as it is with the crime of slavery restored. The people of Texas have not the apology which, with whatever force, is pleaded by many of those in our Southern States, that the slavery which now infects them was a vice, a crime, a misfortune, a disease, inflicted upon them by the parent State, and that is the reason why they must support it now. I must say, that in my heart, if not in my mind, that is the strongest article they ever have adduced in support of it: but Texas has no such defence to set up; slavery was not bequeathed to them from a selfish and cruel stepmother, as almost all the liberal men of Virginia used to say of it in their Commonwealth not many years ago, and as some among them still say. If there can be an apology for this plague spot, I say again that the people of Texas have none to plead, and that is the reason why Texas never shall, with my consent, or, as I hope, with the consent of my constituents, or of any portion of the free people of the United States, become an integral part of the Union.

There is another reason—a reason I admit vastly inferior to the other, but still it is a reason. Texas has acceded to the right of search: she is bound by treaty to that effect. If you take her as a part of ourselves, you take her with her treaties, and then we shall be bound to cede the right of search to Great Britain. I say that this is a reason of infinitely less importance; yet so like am I to a

drowning man, who clings even to straws, that I will not consent to the annexation on that account. And now the gentleman may go to the organ here of I know not what party, and insert an article accusing me of having made an "English argument." Let him go as soon as he pleases, I know it will be said I have made a British speech.

Most joyfully indeed would I compound with the gentlemen from the Southern portion of the Union, if by our joint efforts we could prevail on Texas to abolish slavery again, of which indeed, there seems some faint gleam of hope in the published correspondence between General Hamilton, the Texian envoy, and Lord Palmerston. I would compound never to take Texas, or, if they will agree that slavery shall be abolished there, I will agree to take her. But no, never, while breath is in my body, will I consent to the annexation of any foreign State which is burdened with the curse of slavery.

What I am now to say, I say with great reluctance and with great pain. I am well aware that it is touching upon a sore place, and I would gladly get over it if I could. It has been my effort, as far as was in my power, to avoid any allusion whatever to that question which the gentleman from Virginia tells us that the most lamblike disposition in the South never can approach without anger and indignation. Sir, that is my sorrow. I admit that the fact is so. We cannot touch that subject without raising throughout the whole South a mass of violence and passion, with which one might as well reason as with a hurricane. That I know is the fact in the South, and that is the fact in this House. And it is the reason why members coming from a free State are silenced as soon as they rise on this floor; why they are pronounced out of order; made to sit down; and, if they proceed, are censured and expelled. But, in behalf of the South and of Southern institutions, a man may get up in this House and expatiate for weeks together. On this point I do complain, and I must say; I have been rather disappointed that I have not been put down already as speaking out of order. What I say is involuntary, because the subject has been brought into the House from another quarter, as the gentleman himself admits. I would leave that institution to the exclusive consideration and management of the States more peculiarly interested in it, just as long as they can keep within their own bounds. So far I admit that Congress has no power to meddle with it. As long as they do not step out of their own bounds, and do not put the question to the People of the United States, whose peace, welfare, and happiness are all at stake, so long I will agree to leave them to themselves. But when a member from a free State brings forward certain resolutions, for which, instead of reasoning to disprove his positions, you vote a censure upon him, and that without hearing, it is quite another affair. At the time this was done I said that, as far as I could understand the resolutions proposed by the gentleman from Ohio, (Mr. Giddings,) there were some of them for which I was ready to vote, and some which I must vote against; and I will now tell this House, my constituents, and the world of mankind, that the resolution against which I would have voted was that in which he declares that what are called the slave States have the exclusive right of consultation on the subject of slavery. For that resolution I never would vote, because I believe that it is not just, and does not contain constitutional doctrine. I believe that so long as the slave States are able to sustain their institutions without going abroad or calling upon other parts of the Union to aid them or act on the subject, so long I will consent never to interfere. I have said this, and I repeat it; but if they come to the free States and say to them you must help us to keep down our slaves, you must aid us in an insurrection and a civil war, then I say that with that call comes a full and plenary power to this House and to the Senate over the whole subject. It is a war power. I say it is a war power, and when your country is actually in war, whether it be a war of invasion or a war of insurrection, Congress has power to carry on the war, and must carry it on according to the laws of war; and by the laws of war an invaded country has all its laws and municipal institutions swept by the board, and martial law takes the place of them. This power in Congress has, perhaps, never been called into exercise under the present Constitution of the United States. But when the laws of war are in force, what, I ask, is one of those laws? It is this: that when a country is invaded, and two hostile armies are set in martial array, the commanders of both armies have power to emanci-

pate all the slaves in the invaded territory. Nor is this a mere theoretic statement. The history of South America shows that the doctrine has been carried into practical execution within the last thirty years. Slavery was abolished in Colombia, first, by the Spanish General Morillo, and, secondly, by the American General Bolivar. It was abolished by virtue of a military command given at the head of the army, and its abolition continues to be law to this day. It was abolished by the laws of war, and not by municipal enactments; the power was exercised by military commanders, under instructions, of course, from their respective Governments. And here I recur again to the example of Gen. Jackson. What are you now about in Congress? You are about passing a grant to refund to Gen. Jackson the amount of a certain fine imposed upon him by a Judge under the laws of the State of Louisiana. You are going to refund him the money, with interest; and this you are going to do because the imposition of the fine was unjust. And why was it unjust? Because Gen. Jackson was acting under the laws of war, and because the moment you place a military commander in a district which is the theatre of war, the laws of war apply to that district. I have a correspondence between Gen. Jackson and the Governor of Georgia during the Seminole campaign, in which Gen. Jackson, addressing Governor Rabun, asserted the principle that he, as Governor of a State within his (Gen. J.'s) military division, had no right to give a military order while he (Gen. Jackson) was in the field. The then Governor of Georgia (and I do not know but what it killed the poor man, for he died soon after) did contest the power of Gen. Jackson. He said all he could for State rights, [a laugh.] but Andrew Jackson had given an order, and that order was carried into effect, while the order of the Governor was suppressed.

[Mr. Warren, of Georgia, here asked leave to make a statement in explanation; and the floor having been yielded to him for that purpose by Mr. Adams, he proceeded to give a history of the facts of the case to which Mr. A. had just alluded, but owing to his position at a distance from the Reporter, he was imperfectly heard. The conclusion of what he said was, however, that the Governor of Georgia never yielded the ground he had taken, nor did he die in consequence of the difficulty. See Appendix.]

Mr. Adams resumed. I am glad to hear the explanation, and am entirely willing to concede whatever of merit is due to the Governor of Georgia for resisting what he conceived to be military tyranny. But I am afraid, nevertheless, whatever may have been the success of Governor Rabun in this contest, General Jackson had the right of the question. I might furnish a thousand proofs to show that the pretensions of gentlemen to the sanctity of their municipal institutions under a state of actual invasion and of actual war, whether servile, civil, or foreign, is wholly unfounded, and that the laws of war do, in all such cases, take the precedence. I lay this down as the law of nations. I say that the military authority takes for the time the place of all municipal institutions, and slavery among the rest; and that, under that state of things, so far from its being true that the States where slavery exists have the exclusive management of the subject, not only the President of the United States but the commander of the army has power to order the universal emancipation of the slaves. I have given here more in detail a principle which I have asserted on this floor before now, and of which I have no more doubt, than that you, sir, occupy that chair. I give it in its development, in order that any gentleman from any part of the Union may, if he thinks proper, deny the truth of the position, and may maintain his denial; not by indignation, not by passion and fury, but by sound and sober reasoning from the laws of nations and the laws of war. And if my position can be answered and refuted, I shall receive the refutation with pleasure; I shall be glad to listen to reason, aside, as I say, from indignation and passion. And if, by the force of reasoning, my understanding can be convinced, I here pledge myself to recant what I have asserted.

Let my position be answered; let me be told, let my constituents be told, the people of my State be told—a State whose soil tolerates not the foot of a slave—that they are bound by the Constitution to a long and toilsome march under burning summer suns and a deadly Southern clime for the suppression of a servile war; that they are bound to leave their bodies to rot upon the sands of Carolina, to leave their wives and their children orphans; that those who cannot

march are bound to pour out their treasures while their sons or brothers are pouring out their blood to suppress a servile, combined with a civil or a foreign war, and yet that there exists no power beyond the limits of the slave State where such war is raging to emancipate the slaves. I say, let this be proved—I am open to conviction, but till that conviction comes I put it forth not as a dictate of feeling, but as a settled maxim of the laws of nations, that in such a case the military supersedes the civil power; and on this account I should have been obliged to vote, as I have said, against one of the resolutions of my excellent friend from Ohio, (Mr. Giddings,) or should at least have required that it be amended in conformity with the Constitution of the United States.

In the mean time, this is a reason with me for not desiring the annexation of Texas to this Union, because, if we go to war for that annexation, I entertain serious apprehensions that this will become a practical question. If we shall go to war with Mexico, and, which necessarily follows, go to war with Great Britain, to annex Texas to this Union, the day is not remote, when, in one of the slave States, an invading army from abroad may be combined with an insurrection of the slaves and with a civil war, and the danger still further heightened by an irruption of that whole body of Indians whom you have accumulated and compressed together as if for the very purpose of organizing them for a hostile movement upon our frontier. I put this possibility to the Representatives of the Southern States as presenting a most serious and painful consideration to my mind. The gentleman from Virginia makes very light of this. He talks to us about the star of Texas, which he calls the "lone star of Liberty." Liberty of Texas! The star illumined by the radiance of slavery restored! Yes, that is the star which is to lead us on to victory. So, I suppose, if war shall come, we shall not only acquire this solitary brilliant star of Texas, but we shall have all Mexico added to the United States. Sir, the Isthmus of Panama will hardly stop our victorious arms, and I really wonder the gentleman did not carry us on to Cape Horn. [A laugh.] The gentleman in his dreams, (shall I call them?) told us that President Houston was to plant this same lonely star of Texas on the walls of the city of Mexico, and that if President Houston did not do it, the gentleman himself would. [Loud laughter.] And he means, in this heroic enterprise, to lead on the brave spirits of thousands from the great valley of the Mississippi, inspired by the hope of robbing churches and priests! So it is to be a religious as well as a civil expedition—a sort of crusade, in which the gentleman from Virginia is likely far to transcend the exploits of Tamerlane and Ghengis Khan. The gentleman is soon to plant the lone star of Texas and slavery on the walls of Mexico; and then what is to become of the liberties of these United States? [A laugh.] Is it conformable to the history of the world that the leader of such an army after conquests not reaching to one-tenth the extent of those which the gentleman will achieve, should remain content with the station of an humble, private citizen? No. No. The experience of all mankind has given us warning that if that is to be the course of our public affairs, and such are to be the brilliant fortunes of the gentleman from Virginia, our liberties will stand as little chance in after times as those of the nine millions of the people of Mexico after he shall have conquered them.

But I am inclined to consider all this rather as approaching to what is sometimes called rhodomontade, than a thing in the serious contemplation of the gentleman from Virginia; and I look forward to the time when, in the records of history, the gentleman's name shall be placed side by side, not with the names of Ghengis Khan or Tamerlane, but with that of a still more glorious conqueror by the name of TOM THUMB. [Roars of laughter, long and loud.]

But it is growing late; and as the time has been fixed when this debate is to close, and as the time I have already occupied bears upon my conscience, I will close by repeating my request that the House will pardon the imperfect and desultory manner in which I have endeavored to furnish some reply to the war trumpets of the gentlemen from Virginia and Pennsylvania. I will now yield the floor to some other member who may desire to occupy it.

APPENDIX.

Mr. Warren, of Georgia, desires the publication of the following statement, explanatory of the transaction between Gen. Jackson and Gov. Rabun, referred to by Mr. Adams. It will be seen that the actual result does not at all determine the question which was right. Mr. A. adduced the case as an illustration, not as a proof.

I said in substance that, having been connected with the military expedition ordered by Gov. Rabun, which occasioned the correspondence to which the gentleman from Massachusetts had referred, and although a mere youth, commissioned in that expedition, I could not willingly remain silent, hearing the version of that correspondence given by the gentleman from Massachusetts. No order of Gov. Rabun was ever suppressed by Gen. Jackson; but, on the contrary, the order of Gen. Jackson arresting the commanding officer of that expedition (Capt. Obed Wright) was suppressed by the Judiciary of Georgia.

Sir, after General Jackson, with his army, had arrived in Florida, Indian incursions on the frontier of Georgia and the massacre and plunder of our citizens were common, and the depredators were followed in a direction to Oponee and Phelme towns, west of Flint river. Governor Rabun ordered a military expedition, giving the command to Capt. Wright, directing the destruction of these towns. And, in April, 1818, a pilot employed by Capt. Wright took him to the Chehaw town. It was destroyed. The troops were disbanded, and Capt. Wright, on his way home, and making some stay in the village of my residence, was overtaken by Gen. Jackson's arresting officer, Major John M. Davis, of the U. S. army. Major Davis called upon me, and in great confidence disclosed his business, and inquired for Capt. Wright, to whom in a few minutes I introduced him, and who submitted to the order for arrest, and went with Major Davis, in the execution of the order, until a writ of habeas corpus was issued by the inferior court of Baldwin county against Major Davis, and Capt. Wright discharged from his custody. Gov. Rabun then ordered Capt. Wright to be arrested for breach of orders, in not destroying the two towns ordered, and for destroying a town not ordered. Capt. Wright was allowed his liberty on parole of honor, and afterwards left the country.

No order given by General Jackson in relation to the matter was ever carried into effect, nor was any order given by Gov. Rabun ever suppressed. Gov. Rabun, so far from yielding any right assumed, maintained and executed every order given, and died not of this correspondence, but of disease incident to the climate in which he lived.

I have, gentlemen, prepared this statement, made by me in substance, for your paper, because I am unwilling that any impression should exist any where that any Governor of Georgia, and especially Gov. Rabun, had allowed an order given by him to be suppressed by the dictation of any military commander. I have to say that no instance can be found in the history of Georgia and the Federal Government where Georgia has allowed any officer of the Federal Government, either judicial, executive, or military, either with or without force, to suppress an order made by her Governor; and I trust I may not live to see such suppression effected.

No blame can attach to your Reporters for not hearing my remarks, but I nevertheless desire they should appear in your paper.

I am yours, &c.

LOTT WARREN.



MAR 9 1934



